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FASHIONS IN FURNISHINGS

HOME
MODERN . . .
AMERICAN COLONIAL . . .
CAPE COD STYLE . . .

FASHIONS *in* FURNISHINGS

A Guidepost to Decorating

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Foreword by JEAN AUSTIN, *Editor, The American Home*

Line drawings by HELEN EDELL SLOAN

WHITTLESEY HOUSE
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FASHIONS IN FURNISHINGS

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PUBLISHED BY WHITTLESEY HOUSE

A DIVISION OF THE McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO

SYLVANUS GEORGE LEE

AND

ALFRED THORNTON BOLENDER

WHO SHARE OUR JOBS AS HOMEMAKERS

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Foreword

"Let me tell you how I converted an old store-room into a pretty dining-room at a small expense. . . . The first thing we did was to paint the woodwork . . . a light olive green and a pinkish yellow . . . paper used was a light cream ground with shaded autumn leaves, touched here and there with a dash of gilt. . . . The extension table was the only article bought for the room. . . . Six old, cane-bottom chairs were stained a walnut, and red leather-board bottoms were fitted and nailed in with brass tacks, and six pretty chairs were the result. An old square-top, hard-wood bureau, with four drawers, was made into a sideboard. . . . The two windows were shaded with olive holland, and cream lace curtains were hung from poles, and looped back with olive ribbon. . . . We felt proud of our work."

"The house was small, old, and completely unprepossessing. It looked grim . . . we rolled up our sleeves and pitched in. . . . The ceiling was quite high, so we painted it a dark moss green and brought the color down one end wall. The other walls were painted a soft lime green for light reflection. The woodwork was oak, and we scraped, then bleached it. . . . The chairs we liked cost $28 each, and the buffet we yearned for was well over $200 . . . so we purchased, second hand, a weary, ugly, old oak buffet. Six nondescript chairs were thrown in for $35. The brass tacked leather seats were removed, the backs cut down . . . the horrible stain removed, we then pickled them and upholstered them in a bright print fabric. . . . The oak of the buffet was sanded and pickled to match chair frames . . . with insets of the printed fabric in each door. . . . Our room is now a far cry from the drab spaces it once displayed."

The first homemaking story is from an 1892 issue of *The Household*. The second story is from a late-1947 issue of *The American Home*. Fifty-five years apart—one carefully applying the stain and tacking on the leather seats, our 1947 couple gleefully removing those very things!

But why, you ask, do I use these two stories, published 55 years apart, to introduce a book on how to buy and compose with *new* things? As you get into this book, you will comprehend what all of us who are engaged in inspiring and creating beauty comprehend and which is the very essence of these two little stories—the ageless craving for beauty and the deep pride that comes with creat-

ing it Feletia, signing her article in 1892, was as confident she was inspiring others with ambition to create beauty as were the young-marrieds in Minneapolis in 1947. The authors of this book have this same fervor for beauty, this same urgency to share their enthusiasm, but arm you with knowledge, too. How fortunate you are, then, that in one single volume, you can profit from the experience of two such talented teachers . . . in one book get the whole know-how of attaining deeper values in your daily living, achieve greater beauty for yourself and all about you in that greatest of all professions—creating a home!

I am grateful for all books of this sort that make American homemakers more sensitive to beauty, more ambitious to create a finer life for their families and make them shrewder buyers. This book does all this but, it seems to me, does it with more thoughtfulness, a deeper understanding of the layman's point of view. Knowing the charming homes these two women have created for their own families, I could not wish you more than to hope their work brings the same beauty, usefulness, and joy to you, your family, and your home.

Jean Austin
Editor, The American Home

CHAPTER ONE

A Guidepost to Homemaking

"Around the domestic hearth,
there only is real happiness. . . ."

ANATOLE FRANCE

THE FOCAL POINT of harmonious living is in the home. In a world torn by war, weakened by hunger, and blasted by atom bombs, it is more important than ever before to pick up the pieces and rework them into a fabric that will endure. Brotherhood of man can flourish best in warm rooms, on full stomachs, and in good company. A home charged with security, comfort, and beauty prolongs the battery of peaceful living. By incorporating your highest values in your home, you support one of the strongest pillars of a peaceful society.

In a world where the name bands, the night spots, and the juke boxes are competing with the fireside, the necessity grows for building a home that will be alluring and attractive. In order to be a stabilizing force in the best American tradition, every home will have to be more colorful and more charming than the "bright lights" outside it. Never in history has there been such a challenge and such an opportunity.

Creating a home to hold the finest values of living is one of life's great adventures. If your home is friendly and gracious, it will offer an invitation and a warmth that can never be matched. Be it a one-room apartment or a Georgian country house, it will have the same basic needs. You will want it as beautiful as possible; you will want it comfortable; and it must suit the way you live. No one wishes a "home" like that of the coal miner who used to trudge back wearily each night from work and step around the white string rug in his front hall, which his wife insisted on placing there. Nor do you want one like that of the pint-sized wife who always had to sit in an oversized lounge chair or sofa, purchased by her six-foot husband without her consent.

We should all like to have the complete and perfect home, which would include everything down to the apple pie baking in the oven. It is not so easy to achieve. It takes time and effort. But, in the achieving, there is an infinite reward of happiness for all who live in it.

This book is a guidepost to those who want their dreams of home to come true. There are many pitfalls along the way, as some of us have learned through our mistakes. If we had only known how to buy furniture, fabrics, and rugs wisely. . . . If we had only known a little more about decoration. . . . We could have avoided needless expense and added to our own enjoyment. In this volume are tools and techniques that any novice will find helpful and a few simple rules for him (or her) to remember. It will teach him the basic requirements of home decoration. It will enable him to protect his furnishing investments and make them sound. We change our hats or suits with the seasons; once purchased, we do not change our sofas, desks, or rugs for many years.

The first step is one that will cost nothing. You can develop your latent good taste to appreciate fineness in all things. When you know the difference between good and bad design and can recognize the difference between fine and poor quality, you will have increased your sensitivity and awareness to beauty. Then, and only then, will you see that good taste is within your reach and be inspired to create something of your own at a budget you can afford.

This book is not for the person who thinks a mink coat is of more value than a new rug, nor for the one who puts a country-club membership above a year at college. Rather, it is for the person whose love of beauty, though unconscious, is a glow within the heart. It is for the realist who yearns for better living within the framework of a better home.

Today there is a revolution in political, social, and economic life all over the world. It is the aftermath of war. Homes are not exempt from it. The maidless household is a war product—face it or not. Another basic domestic change, which will be with us for many years, is that space is now at a premium. Most new houses are smaller and have fewer rooms than houses in the past.

A good element in the social revolution is our increase in tolerance for the other fellow's way of life. We cannot now look down our noses at Modern interiors just because we may prefer Traditional styles. There is no longer any absolute criterion of good taste. Taste has become a relative matter. What is good taste for a fisherman's cottage on the coast of Maine would be bad taste for a formal town house. Likewise, a Modern one-story ranch house, which calls for simple Modern or Provincial furnishings, would be wholly off-key if done in the elegant manner of Louis XVI. Taste is part of each man's way of life. Our taste is closely akin to our sense of values and our personal philosophy of living.

This leads to the question, "What is good taste?" Quite simply, good taste is the ability to make the most artistic, appropriate, and comfortable use of well-designed, well-made furnishings against a given background. Most people think that good taste is an inborn trait. On the contrary, it is never inherited but always acquired. It improves with consciousness and actual practice. Any of the current magazines on home decoration or the model rooms in large department and furniture stores can help to stimulate taste awareness and sharpen decorating interest. When you furnish a home in good taste, with things that go together harmoniously, you have achieved lasting beauty.

There are many different styles and fashions in home furnishings. For example, overscaled coffee tables and tall lamps are fashions in today's interiors. Styles are specific types of designs, woods, and fabrics to which acceptance has been given. At certain times, certain styles become the fashion. Hoop skirts were fashionable a hundred years ago. So were the stiff, armless chairs that accommodated them. Today's lounge chairs invite relaxation and ease in a way that goes with our casual clothes and our need of real comfort. We have adapted the styles of the past—their good lines and sound design—but have added springs and upholstery to make them our own styles A lounge chair may have the cabriole leg of Chippendale or the straight leg of Sheraton, but it is enhanced for today's living by having a loose cushion on a well-constructed and upholstered spring base. Comfort is today's primary demand.

Beware of fashions that are merely current modes. Shiny brass beds were a fashion in our grandmother's day that has since died. However, the Windsor chair, which came to us via the early settlers from England, is a style with a permanent place in any informal American home.

The same is true of architecture. Unfortunately, in most of our cities, suburbs, and small towns, there are more examples of bad architecture than good. Also, there are more old houses than new. Many of these, however, fifty or a hundred years old, are really beautiful because of their lines, proportions, and the materials that went into them. They were built to fill a definite need and were expressions of their own eras. If one is going to buy a ready-made house, it is well to know something about architectural styles. Because of their intrinsic beauty, three old styles have remained consistently popular in America. Today, reproductions of Colonial homes are spread throughout the country; we see innumerable Cape Cod cottages; and there are red-brick, white-trimmed Georgian houses everywhere.

Left: Vertical house of the General Grant era

Rejuvenated farmhouse of the Middle West. *(Courtesy of Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)*

Story-and-a-half Cape Cod house with dormer windows.

Today's interpretation of Cape Cod style with picture window and garage wing.

(Courtesy of Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

The characteristic qualities of these three styles of architecture make them easy to recognize. The exterior of the Cape Cod cottage (a type originally built by fishermen on the Cape to protect them from stormy winters) is usually white clapboard or natural weathered shingles. It has a chimney in the center. In shape the cottage is small, compact, and boxlike, and is generally one or one-and-a-half stories high. If the latter, it often has dormer windows on the upper floor. Originally built as a single unit, it is sometimes enlarged to include a wing on one or both ends. The windows are small, double-hung, and shuttered. One reason for its lasting popularity is its economy of space and the fact that it costs less to build than more elaborate styles.

The Colonial "salt-box" type of house gets its name from the roof, which suggests the lid of the old-fashioned salt box found in the kitchens of the early settlers. One side of the roof is long and sloping (like the lid), while the opposite side has a short, high pitch. This style originated in New England. It is usually built of white clapboard or weathered shingles with a great stone or brick chimney at one end and, today, a garage wing or an enclosed side porch.

The other favored variant of the Colonial style is the "Dutch" Colonial. The distinctive feature of this house is again the roof. It may have a gambrel roof, which means there are two pitches between the ridge and the eaves. The original purpose of this was to increase the attic storage space. Most often its walls are of painted clapboard or shingles or a combination of shingles and native stone.

The Georgian style is more formal and imposing. The Georgian home is in symmetrical balance with fairly large windows, usually shuttered, on both sides of a simple classic doorway. It has a large brick chimney at the end, or sometimes one at each end. In most cases it is made of red brick, with wood window trim, shutters, and doorways painted white or dark green. It has a plain, sloping roof of wood shingles or slate. Today we frequently add wings to include a garage and screened porch. The Georgian house is two stories high.

The climate, the native materials, and the nationality of the colonists flavored the architectural style that flourished in each part of America. In New England, seasoned wood was used for building, while in the Middle Eastern states stone was employed. The South built with brick, to keep the heat out of its great plantation houses. By and large, our best inheritance, architecturally speaking, comes from our own American colonists, because what they chose to erect was eminently suited to the country we live in.

Stone and-clapboard Dutch Colonial house with gambrel roof

Today's interpretation of Georgian Colonial with matching picture windows.

American Colonial style with porch wings.

Red-brick Southern Colonial style with two-story white pillars.

A Spanish type ranch house of the Southwest with adobe walls and red-tile roof.

oday's interpretation of French Provincial style with picture window, French doors, and Mansard roof *(Courtesy of The American Home)*

Note curved-top windows and entrance courtyard.

English country house with steep-pitched roof and stained beams on the upper story.

Regency house with short-pitched roof and matching one-story wings formed by garage and porch.

One-story Modern house with corner and picture windows and a low-pitched sloping roof. *(Courtesy of The American Home.)*

One-story Modern house with horizontal lines and large window areas. *(Courtesy of the architect, L. Morgan Yost.)*

(Courtesy of The American Home)

Split-level Modern house in the Middle West. Living area forms left wing, with bedrooms one-half flight up over service wing.

Two-story Modern house with horizontal lines and extended eaves. *(Courtesy of The American Home)*

Today we find Spanish houses with cream plaster walls and red-tile roofs in the tropical and semitropical lands of Florida and California. They are well suited to the climate and terrain there. But have you ever noticed how inappropriate a Spanish house looks in a Chicago suburb, or in Westchester? It does not go with the countryside or the variations in the weather.

There are several other "imported" Traditional styles that suit most parts of our land. They are the French Provincial, the half-timbered English country-house style, and the formal English Regency, a distinguished evolution of the Georgian style.

The French Provincial, or French country house is built of white painted brick or stucco. It usually has a Mansard roof, with a short pitch on all four sides. (The name Mansard came from the famous French architect Mansard, who lived at the time of Louis XIV.) The windows are long, built from ceiling to floor, with either solid or louvered shutters, and the tops of the windows are frequently curved. The house is compact in shape but often has one or two wings which form a "courtyard." It may be either one or two stories high.

The English country house is also of white brick or stucco, with dark stained beams making a patterned effect across the upper stories. It has a plain shingled or simulated thatched roof, built at a steep pitch. It is usually rambling and has large brick or stone chimneys and groups of chimney pots.

The Regency style is a formalized Georgian type of house. Today's interpretation of Regency has a white-brick or clapboard exterior with a classic doorway and a very short, pitched roof. As a rule, there are no shutters. Its formal appearance may be heightened by one-story, matching wings, which hold garage and porch.

Many of us prefer homes based on these styles of the past. They evoke in us emotions combining warmth, coziness, and security. We are attracted by the colonnaded fanlight of a Georgian doorway or the pine-paneled walls of an Early American living room in a Cape Cod cottage. As long as the best in our country's Traditional architecture can inspire such deep feelings of affection, so long will it endure.

There is another very important style which requires a special point of view. It was conceived in the twentieth century and, lacking a better name, is called "Modern." It grew out of the basic needs of our contemporary way of living. Our customs, habits, health, and culture have all had a hand in shaping it. The important thing to realize is that it starts from within and builds out. The

floor plan is all-important, and the exterior merely conforms to it. Family interests come first, and the house is built around them. The flow of spaces from one area to another, the desire for light and sun, the most efficient use of materials—all are requisite in the thinking behind Modern architecture. Simple horizontal lines, picture and corner windows, extended eaves which protect large window areas are its external characteristics.

In the last analysis, we are a democracy, which means that we have the freedom to live as we choose. If your best friend likes the formality of a Georgian house and you prefer the informality of a simple Modern, you both may be happy. There is infinite charm in the wide variety of our architectural tastes. We do not like regimentation. We cherish our freedom of speech and our freedom of thought. Luckily, each of us can enjoy his individual preferences in his own way of life. Real happiness around the domestic hearth will invariably be of our own making.

CHAPTER TWO

ABC's of Room Planning

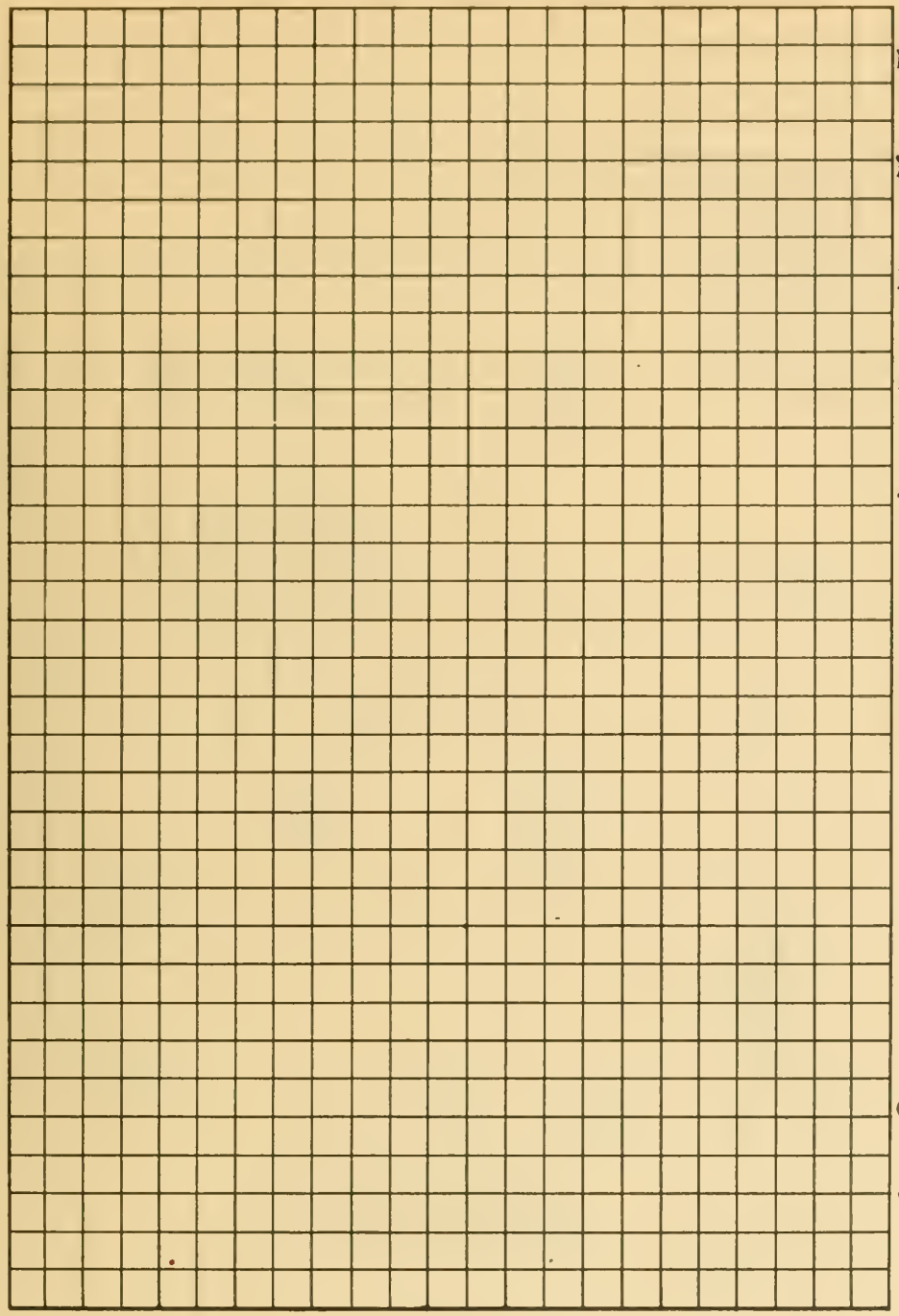
In all successful rooms the groups of furnishings have a purpose, related to the function of the room. You can make good use of your space and create a friendly and inviting interior, by knowing how to combine and arrange the elements in your room. Before one piece of furniture is bought or placed, you should make a "room plan." This is the first step toward achieving a livable home. Gone are the days when furniture collected like leftovers in the icebox; equally outmoded is the time when furniture was placed around the walls, as was done in the formal drawing rooms of the eighteenth century and is done now with public benches in a waiting room.

A great deal of mystery surrounds the subject of interior decoration. Almost everyone believes you have to be an expert designer or a talented artist in order to furnish a room with distinction and charm. This is not true. Of course, there is a certain amount of knowledge that is helpful. But a few basic rules should enable you to be your own decorator and give you confidence in yourself.

Before you start furnishing a new room from scratch or rearranging an old one, draw a floor plan of the room on graph paper. Each ¼-inch square should represent 1 square foot. Now draw "templates," or form models, of your basic furniture pieces to the same scale: ¼ inch equals 1 foot. Cut out these templates and use them for arranging your furniture groups on the paper floor plan. Be sure that your plan includes window and door openings, electric-light outlets, radiators, fireplace, and any other architectural details that will affect your placing of the furniture. The floor plan of the living room illustrated will show you how to indicate all these essentials (see page 19).

If you have old pieces of furniture in your room which you want to use, be sure to measure them accurately. Then cut your templates to fit their measurements. This is the way decorators work in planning a room. It will help you to visualize your room when it is done, will enable you to select the right furnishings for it, and will save you from the common errors of overcrowding or of buying the wrong basic pieces. However, before you make your final arrangement of templates on the floor plan, you should know the simple fundamentals of good decoration.

Furniture Forms or Templates



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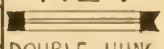


DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW

CASEMENT WINDOW

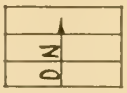
DIRECTION DOOR OPENS

SWINGING DOOR

ARCHWAY

RADIATOR

FIRE PLACE



STAIRS-DOWN

STAIRS-UP

CEILING OUTLET

WALL OUTLET

DOUBLE WALL OUTLET

1/4" = 1 FOOT

What is interior decoration? It is the selection and arrangement of home furnishings guided by good taste. When a stranger looks at your living room for the first time and exclaims, "What a beautiful room!" he simply means that the selection and arrangement of everything in the room is in good taste, that the principles of decoration have been successfully applied.

The elements, or basic principles, of good decoration are five in number. No one of them comes first or is more important than any other. They are

1. Scale
2. Balance
3. Comfort
4. Pattern
5. Color

Each one of these factors plays a vital part in the decorating process.

Scale is the art of using things of the right size for the space they are to occupy, for the use they are to have, and for the persons who are to use them. Not only should the details of the room be in correct proportion to the size of the room, but they should be in proper relationship and proportion to each other.

For example, large pieces of furniture are unsuitable in a small room. The opposite is also true; small-scale objects in a large room look insignificant and do not enhance the composition. Have you ever seen a small dining room crowded with a twelve-piece dining set? Some ambitious salesman has oversold his customer, and it takes a shoehorn to get the guests in and out. Or have you seen a large, handsome sofa flanked by two diminutive end tables and short, squatty lamps? Here is another glaring example of bad scale. The sofa demands important end tables and tall lamps, both in the interests of correct scale and adequate lighting. Most of these basic principles are nothing more than common sense applied against the background of daily living.

Balance in room planning means the proper distribution of weight and the best use of space. Good balance insures the comfort and convenience of the persons using the room. Never overcrowd a living room with big pieces so that it is difficult to move around. This makes people uncomfortable and restless. Place furniture in natural conversation groups. Never place large pieces "catty-cornered." Important pieces, like sofas, pianos, chests, and desks, should always be parallel with, or at right angles to, the walls. If you have a large piece of

Room Plans

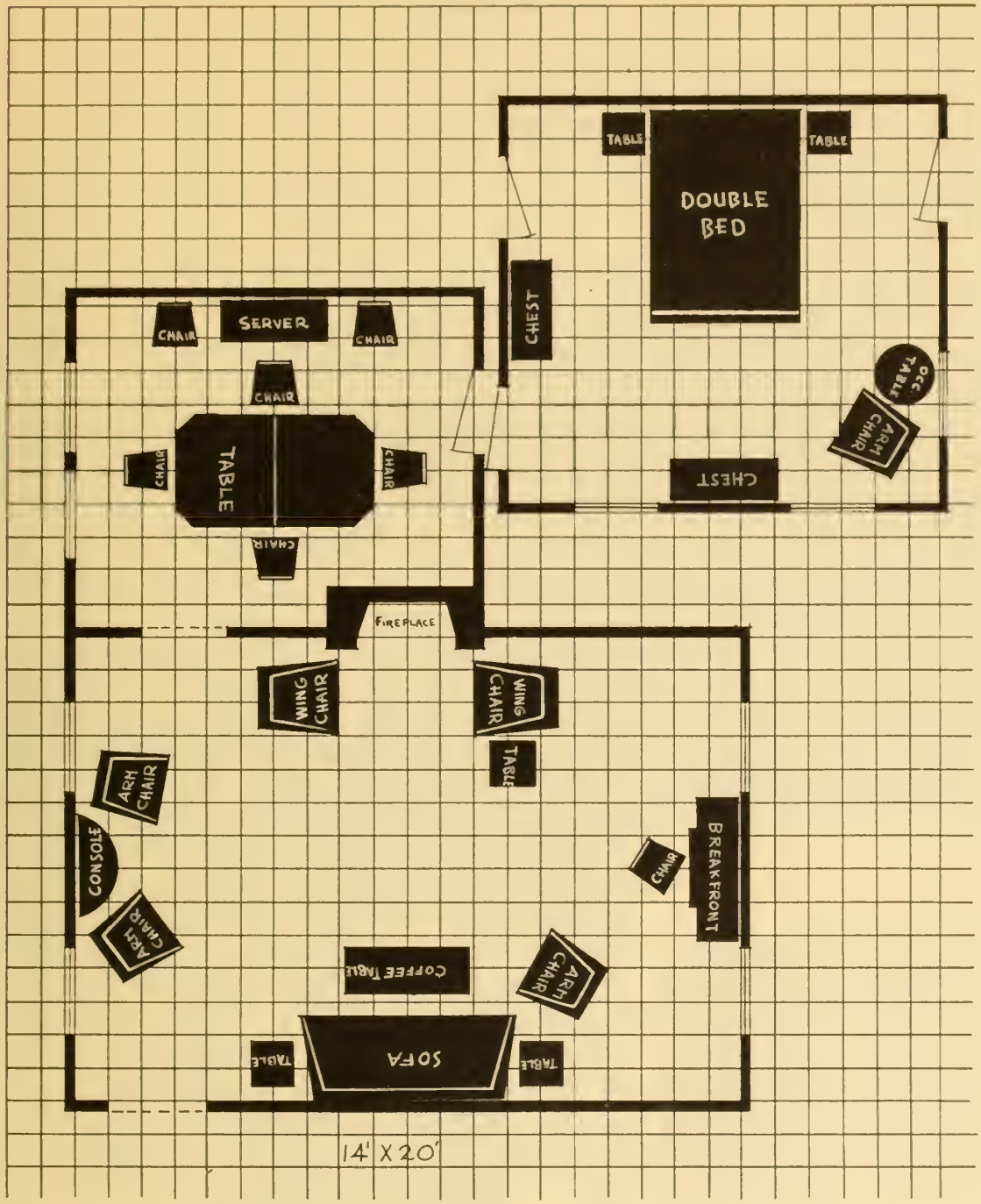


TABLE
TABLE
DOUBLE BED
CHEST
CHAIR
SERVER
CHAIR
CHAIR
TABLE
CHAIR
CHAIR
CHAIR
FIRE PLACE
WING CHAIR
WING CHAIR
TABLE
ARM CHAIR
CONSOLE
ART CHAIR
COFFEE TABLE
ART CHAIR
SOFA
TABLE
TABLE
CHAIR
BREAK FRONT
CHEST
OCC TABLE
ART CHAIR
14' X 20'

(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)

Good balance in room planning includes conversation groups, reading groups, and open traffic lanes.

Window group. *(Courtesy of Grand Rapids Furniture Makers Guild.)*

grand piano must be placed with the long side against the wall. *(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)*

The depth of the seat, the height of the arms, and the angle of repose determine the comfort of any chair. Designed by T. Robsjohn-Gibbings.

(Courtesy of Widdicomb Furniture Co.)

furniture on one wall with nothing of similar bulk to balance it on the opposite wall, two pieces of furniture can be made to do the trick. A sofa on a long wall, for instance, may be balanced by a pair of armchairs with a table between them. A room that is well balanced will have conversation groups, reading groups, a desk or game or music group, and open traffic lanes.

Now consider an average living room, 14 by 20 feet, with a fireplace in the center of one long wall flanked by two windows. The opposite long wall is broken by an entrance arch at the side. At one narrow end of the room is a bay window or a picture window; at the other, a pair of French doors leading to a porch. First you want a focal point, a dramatic center of interest. This can be a group around the fireplace, at the picture or bay window, or along the unbroken wall of the room. For the fireplace, you might select a pair of comfortable fireside chairs, or a love seat and a wing chair, or a man-sized and a smaller sized lounge chair. Flank these with side tables and good-sized lamps, and you have a center of interest. On the long wall, opposite the fireplace, place a sofa group, including a coffee table, two end tables, and matching reading lamps. End tables should be the same height as the arms of the sofa or chairs they are to complement.

BAD ROOM PLAN

GOOD ROOM PLAN

Now how do you treat the two ends of the room? For the bay or picture window, plan to have a drum table or a drop-leaf table with a pair of occasional armchairs. These open armchairs may be drawn up to the fireside or the sofa group when you have guests. Next to the window they make a pleasant spot for afternoon tea, for sewing or reading, or for Sunday-night supper for two. At the other end of the room, why not try a desk on one side of the French doors and a radio with a side chair on the other? This is a conventional room, but it is also a comfortable, well-balanced room, which is entirely livable. It has open traffic lanes, no feeling of crowding, and comfort for reading, conversation, music, and desk work.

Of course, the interests of the family must be taken into account. If you are a card player, you may prefer a card-table group at the picture window. Or, if it is a large bay with a garden view, you may want a love seat facing a pair of small armless chairs with a low table between them. Pairs of pieces add beauty and serenity to a room plan; a pair of settees, a pair of lounge chairs, or a pair of end tables and lamps is always attractive. This can be overdone, however. No room should have too many pairs.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

Good room planning includes chairs of various sizes to fit assorted sizes of people.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

If you have a grand piano, it should be placed with the long side of the piano against the wall. If you have an upright or a spinet piano, set it parallel to the wall, never at an angle or catty-cornered. Heavy pieces should always be separated as far as possible in a room. Otherwise, you will have the feeling that the room tilts like the deck of a ship. Have you ever seen a room spoiled because the sofa was placed against the curve of the grand piano? The lighter pieces were probably all at the opposite end of the room, which made it "list" badly. Actually, when a room is properly balanced and carefully planned, it can accommodate more furniture than when it is not and will be more comfortable and livable. The floor plans in the illustrations will show you how the basic principles of decoration may be applied (see page 19).

Instead of a fireplace, a wall of books becomes the focal point of interest. *(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)*

Comfort is always a prime necessity of good decoration. In a chair or sofa, it is the angle of repose, the depth of the seat, and the height of the arms that determine the comfort of the piece, not its bulk or massive scale. A truly comfortable room should have chairs of all sizes to fit all the people who come into it. Then there is no danger of a heavy husband sitting on a spindly side chair or of a tiny wife being lost in the depths of a huge sofa. A comfortable room is one that suits the family living in it.

There is a story of a husband who surprised his wife by furnishing the living room of their new home during her absence. He was tall and she was short. Every piece he bought for the room suited his long legs. The sofa and lounge chairs were large and deep, like those in a men's club. She never found a place to sit in the room that was comfortable for reading or sewing. One small-sized lounge chair would have solved her problem. The angle of repose and the depth of the seat of at least one chair should have been selected for a small woman.

Pattern and Color will be discussed in Chapter Nine, following the chapter on Fabrics. In the meantime, you are ready to make a floor plan, arranging your furniture templates on the floor plan you have drawn. You will keep in mind the basic principles of scale, balance, and comfort.

First, arrange your heavy pieces, placing them in the important areas around the room—the sofa against the long wall, the lounge chairs face to face at the fireplace or picture window, the desk and spinet piano or radio-recordplayer on the end walls. Now you have a good distribution of weight, which gives your room both balance and comfort. Naturally, your end tables will be placed next to the sofa and lounge chairs. Smaller pieces, like open armchairs, a drum or drop-leaf table, will be placed at the narrow ends of the room.

A good many living rooms today have no fireplaces. Take, for example, a room in a Cape Cod cottage, about 12 by 18 feet, which has one long, unbroken inside wall and an outside wall with a picture window. Again the same principles of decoration will apply. Without a fireplace, the window wall is your focal point of interest and should be dramatized by a pair of lounge chairs with a low, round coffee table between them. On the long inside wall you may place tne sofa group, including end tables and reading lamps. At the narrow end of the room, between bedroom and entrance doors, set a desk and chair, flanked by bookshelves. At the dinette end, if there is a short wall, use a small chest and an open armchair. Again you have considered the interests of the family and gotten the most out of your space, and traffic lanes have been left open for

Because of picture window, the dining table is placed at right angles to the window.

(Courtesy of Grand Rapids Furniture Makers Guild)

A dual-purpose or bed-sitting room.

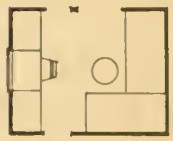
comfortable daily living. If your room is narrow like this one, do not place a coffee table in front of the sofa. It will be in the way every time anyone passes through the room to the dinette or the bedroom. The floor plan illustrated will help you visualize the setup.

Your dining room as well as your living room needs careful planning. If you have a large window with a pleasant view, it is often wise to move the table over to it and away from the conventional center of the room. The table may be placed at right angles to the window with a pair of chairs on each side.

A buffet should always be set against the longest unbroken wall. If you have a server or a small chest for silver and table linens, place it on the short wall near the door to the kitchen. Keep at least four chairs grouped around the table. It is more friendly and less formal than having all the chairs placed along the walls.

Today most bedrooms serve as dual-purpose rooms, such as bed-sitting rooms or bed-study-sewing rooms. To achieve both comfort and versatility in a small or average-sized bedroom, study the floor plans of the four bedrooms illustrated. In each of the rooms shown, two people can live practically and well, because of the proper placing of the furniture groups.

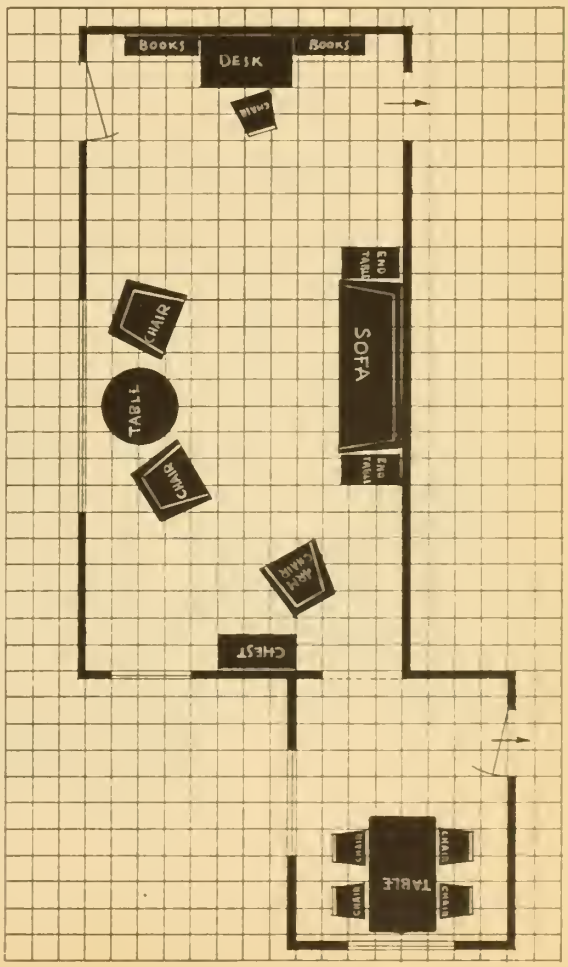
BEDROOMS for TWO



(Courtesy of Calling All Girls.)

Armed with a knowledge of how to make floor plans and how to arrange furniture, you are now ready to make a selection of basic pieces for your first home. There are two ways of doing this. Either you may buy everything you need, with the budget you have; or you may select only a few good, essential pieces, designed to serve as permanent possessions, and then buy more gradually, adding one piece at a time—the best you can afford. In the long run, this is the better scheme. In either case, your floor plans and room needs must be considered.

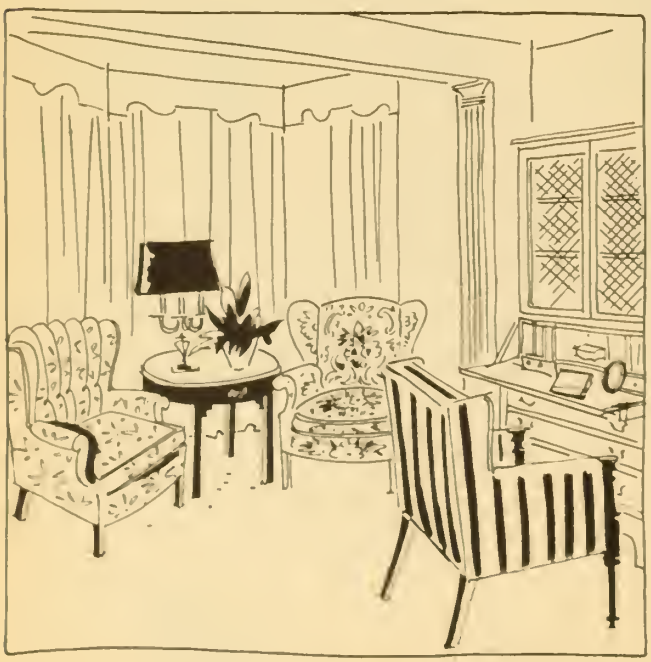
LIVING ROOM PLAN ... {WITH PICTURE WINDOW AS FOCAL POINT of INTEREST



There are three major furniture styles offered you by today's stores. You will need to know something about them before you decide in which style you will have your rooms done. They are the formal (eighteenth-century or Traditional) style, the informal (Early American and French Provincial) style, and Modern, or Contemporary, furniture. You may want to add pieces of a single style to the furniture you already own, or you may want to mix them with each other. The following four chapters will help you in your selection.

Bad. Too many upholstered pieces.

Good. Contrasting open-arm and upholstered pieces.



Bad. Too many tufted upholstered pieces.

Good. Contrasting upholstered and open-arm pieces.

CHAPTER THREE

Formal Traditional Styles

THE STORY OF FURNITURE

The furnishings of the home as we know them today did not just happen. They were the product of centuries of history. When furniture first came into importance, it was to fill the needs of religion, the state, and absolute monarchs. The golden era of Greece contributed much to the culture of mankind—to art, literature, furniture, and home furnishings. The classic proportions of Greek architecture, the beauty of Greek statues, the refinement of Greek furniture, and the delicate simplicity of Greek ornamentation is felt today in many of the things we consider beautiful. The simple dignity of the architecture of Modern homes and buildings has the classic quality of Greek design.

The great Roman Empire did not breed many creative artists. Instead, it copied from the Greek and earlier civilizations. In so doing, it lost much that was fine. Luxury and lavishness, the desire for public display, and the abandonment of the home were some of the rocks on which the Empire was wrecked. Following its fall, the civilized world entered upon an era of spiritual and artistic decay. The chaos of the Dark Ages lasted from about the fifth century until the beginning of the fifteenth. However, toward the beginning of the twelfth century, there came a new desire for and an ability to create beauty. This was inspired by the Church. Though the homes of the masses were the poorest hovels, the people of Europe began to build for God. In the great Gothic cathedrals, the highest expression of their art and craftsmanship is to be found. The magnificent carving of screens and altars, the painting of religious pictures, and the construction and stonework of churches later served as models for domestic architecture and decoration. Conditions improved, and there was a general intellectual awakening. It was the period of the "rebirth," or Renaissance.

THE RENAISSANCE, 1350–1550

RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance began in Italy. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Italians were far more prosperous than any of the peoples of northern and western Europe. As a whole, they seemed to have retained an appreciation of the artistry of their ancestors. It was on the growing wealth of the independent Italian cities and of the great commercial families, such as the Medici, that the Renaissance was founded. Famous artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael, were supported by rich patrons. Their work served to inspire a new growth and development in all the arts.

RENAISSANCE

The furniture of this period, while beautiful, was essentially palatial rather than easy. (Bodily comfort in furniture did not appear until much later.) The chairs were rectangular and straight; the tables very large, with legs ending in lions' paws. Heavy stretchers, or underbracings, were used between the legs. Carving in low relief was the chief form of ornamentation. Upholstery, in the form of heavily fringed velvet covers with tassels and flat brass nails, added to the richness of beds, chairs, and stools. The wood was mainly oak. For the past few decades, Renaissance type furniture has been used to fill the lounges and lobbies of hotels, public buildings, and formal clubs.

TUDOR-ELIZABETHAN

The Tudor, or Elizabethan, period was the English equivalent of the Renaissance. It was the English golden age of art and letters—the time of Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and Ben Jonson. It was also an era of intense commercial activity and discovery. In fact, it was the beginning of the great British Empire. All this naturally bore an influence upon the decorative arts.

TUDOR-ELIZABETHAN

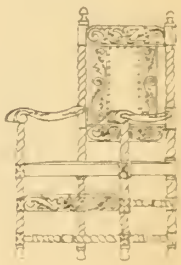
Tudor furniture is characterized by its huge bulbous ornaments and massive turnings. Chair arms, which had formerly been perpendicular to chair backs, began to slope downward. Tables were long and narrow with heavy stretchers, or underbracings. Beds were enormous. Among the principal motifs used for carving were the Tudor rose and "linen-fold" paneling, the latter inspired by the folds of linen that covered the bread on the communion table.

The melon bulb on legs of tables and chests are characteristic of the Jacobean period. (*Set of Forever Amber, Courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox Studios.*)

THE JACOBEAN PERIOD, 1558–1688

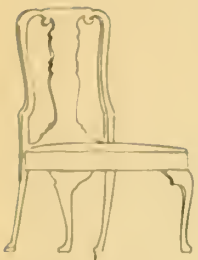
JACOBEAN

In the Jacobean period are included the reigns of the four monarchs of the house of Stuart: James I, Charles I, Charles II, and James II. During their lives, furniture was lavishly carved, rich in design, and elaborate in decoration. The "melon" bulb of tables and chests was smaller than its Renaissance predecessor. Later in the period, tables and chairs often had legs with spiral turnings. Jacobean styles show a new lightness in scale and an increase in grace. They mark a period of transition toward the slender lines of the eighteenth century. This can be seen in the accompanying illustration of a Jacobean room from the film *Forever Amber*.


JACOBEAN

The backs of the chairs rose vertically from the seats, which made them very uncomfortable. Tables were either round, with low-relief carving on the apron, or long and narrow, of the trestle variety. Jacobean furniture is still used in university halls, large clubrooms, and hotel foyers.

WILLIAM AND MARY, 1688–1702


WILLIAM & MARY

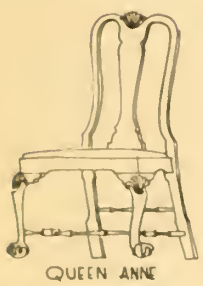
When an English princess, Mary Stuart, and her Dutch husband, William of Orange, took over the English throne, the Renaissance ended in England. They made popular the Dutch ideal of comfort, which contrasted strongly with the Tudor-Jacobean ideal of stately dignity. Chairs were upholstered and made comfortable for the first time in history. Curved lines broke up the straight contours of the Renaissance styles. New pieces of furniture appeared; desks, tables, cupboards, and highboys were introduced into the homes of the wealthy. Walnut and fruit woods began to replace oak in the manufacture of household articles.

WILLIAM & MARY

Table legs of this period can be identified by their inverted-cup motif. Chairs had high, curved backs, with a center splat shaped like a violin, or "fiddle." Hence we call them "fiddleback" chairs. For the first time, the cabriole leg was used on chairs, chests, and tables. This leg was made in the shape of a long *S*-curve, turning out below the chair seat and in toward the foot. It continued to be used in many later periods, so that it is most important for us to know how to recognize it. William and Mary styles are occasionally reproduced in today's dining-room suites.

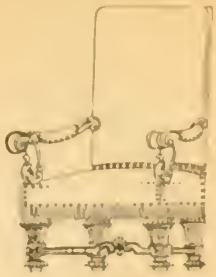
QUEEN ANNE, 1702–1714

The age of Queen Anne has been called the "first modern furniture period." Designs current during her reign have been used again and again down to the present day. A typical detail is the cabriole leg, with an exaggerated turn at the knee, heavily carved in a shell motif. The foot of the chair was a club, hoof, or claw and ball. Chair backs were spoon shaped to fit the contour of the body; tops were rounded, with a fiddle-shaped splat; and seats were narrower at the back, like those of today's side chairs. Stretchers on tables and chairs were discarded.

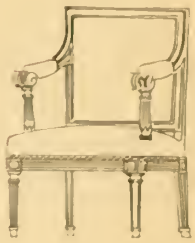

QUEEN ANNE

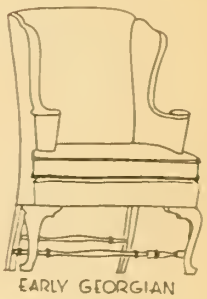
The general feeling of Queen Anne furniture carried over into the designs of the famous cabinetmakers of the eighteenth century. Like these later styles, Queen Anne furniture is "good" today. Usually it is reproduced in walnut, the wood most frequently used in her time.

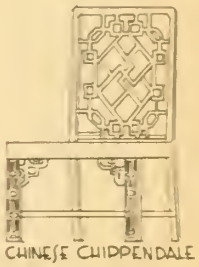
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STYLES, 1700–1800


LOUIS XIV

LOUIS XV


LOUIS XVI


EARLY GEORGIAN


CHINESE CHIPPENDALE

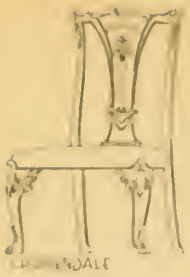
The eighteenth century has been called the "golden age of the decorative arts." In all the important countries of Europe, the rebirth of art and culture during the Renaissance paved the way toward this peak of perfection. Furniture made during the eighteenth century is considered so beautiful that it is still copied today.

In France, the styles were called after the kings: Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI. Napoleon was responsible for the Directoire and French Empire styles which followed.

The English furniture that we have inherited from this time has a beauty that has never waned. The earlier part of the eighteenth century was graced by the lovely furniture of Queen Anne. Although she lived during an age of political upheaval, the Queen's own life was one of great domestic happiness. In consequence, home life took on a new prominence, the charm of a happy family existence being transmitted from the spirit to the very furnishings of the rooms.

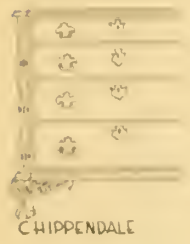
Following the reign of Queen Anne came the reigns of George I, George II, and George III. This span of years is known as the Georgian period in England. All furniture up to the Georgian period was called after the ruler of the country at the time in which it was made. Then there appeared four designers so talented and so individual that their creations have always borne their names. They were Thomas Chippendale, George Hepplewhite, Robert Adam, and Thomas Sheraton. The furniture of each of these men had very definite personal characteristics. They all worked principally in mahogany, the first time this wood was so used.

Among the most colorful and important names in furniture history is that of Thomas Chippendale. His shop in London was a meeting place for many of the celebrities of his day—Dr. Samuel Johnson, the lexicographer; David Garrick, the actor; Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter. Being as much a businessman and a promoter as he was an artist, Chippendale conceived most of his designs to please his customers. Many of the motifs he used were inspired by the French and Chinese. Although he "borrowed" from foreign styles, he also improved upon them. His beautiful chairs brought him his greatest fame, but equally distinguished were his sofas, secretaries, and mirrors. Characteristics of the Chippendale style are

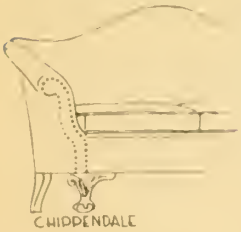


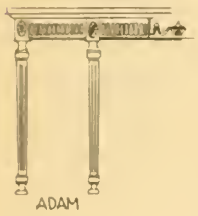
1. Chairs with fretwork backs and straight Chinese legs
2. Pierced, ladder-backed chairs
3. Ribbon-back chairs with cabriole legs, claw-and-ball feet
4. Elaborate brass hardware on chests and desks
5. Camel-backed sofas with high curved backs
6. Heavy pieces with rich carving

The brothers Adam were Scotch architects, Robert being the best known of the four. Their Greek trade name was *Adelphi*. They visited Pompeii and Herculaneum and were so much influenced by the beauty of the Greek and Roman excavations they saw that they started a classic revival upon their return home. They designed furniture suitable for the interiors of the houses they built but never made any of it themselves. Their pieces had more grace and simplicity than those of the older Chippendale. Among the buildings they planned was the first "studio" apartment house in London, which was inhabited by artists and men of letters. The chief characteristics of the Adam style are



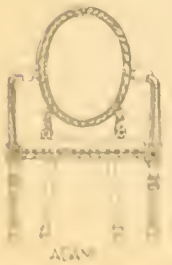
1. Classic details and motifs—such as urns, wreaths, swags, and medallions—on mantels and doorways, chairs and tables
2. Oval or wheel-shaped chair backs
3. Square and tapered legs, with spade-shaped or collared toes
4. Low-relief carving on the aprons and legs of chairs and tables

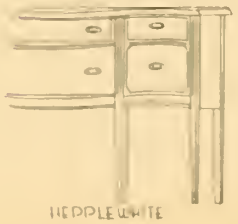


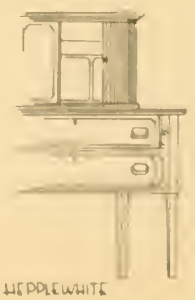


Equally important is the work of George Hepplewhite. He actually built some of the furniture that his contemporary, Robert Adam, designed. He loved the graceful court styles made popular in France by Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. His furniture had a tremendous vogue between 1785 and 1795, but he died before he really enjoyed the pleasure of success. Since then, his reputation has continued to grow enormously. He simplified the French styles of Louis XV and XVI and translated them into what he called "a fashion to suit English taste in furniture." Like Adam, his designs were lighter in scale than those of Chippendale. The principal identifying marks of Hepplewhite's style are

1. Chests, sideboards, and consoles with serpentine, or wavy, fronts
2. Slender, tapered, plain or reeded, square or round legs with spade or collared feet





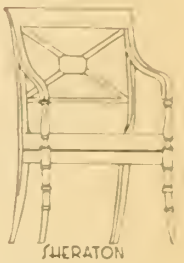


3. Chair backs in the form of ovals, interlacing hearts or shields, with the famous three plumes of the Prince of Wales in the shield backs
4. Marquetry, or inlay, decorations

Thomas Sheraton was a poor, self-educated preacher. His poverty soured his attitude toward the world, and he maliciously attacked his successful contemporaries in his book on cabinetmaking. He was very proud, sought favor from no one, and died an unsung genius.

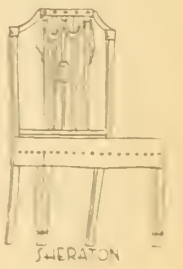
He was the exponent of the straight line. His furniture is smaller in scale than Chippendale's and has the daintiness of Hepplewhite's. He made a specialty of sideboards. He always depended on fine materials and construction to reveal the beauty of his work. The principal characteristics of Sheraton's style are

1. Graceful, curved arms on armchairs which join the backs of the chairs without a break
2. Side chairs with straight, tapering, sometimes reeded legs and tapering feet or collared toes
3. Square chair backs with vertical balusters, latticed bar work, splats, or cane backs
4. Chests with bowed fronts and oval drawer pulls in brass
5. Hardware on larger pieces designed according to classical motifs—in urns, swags, fruit, flowers, lions' heads

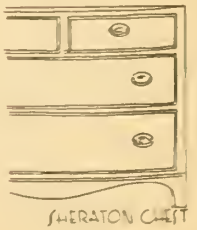


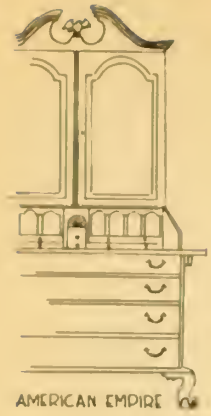
AMERICAN COLONIAL AND FEDERAL ERA, 1720–1830

In America, Savery, McIntyre, and Duncan Phyfe were the best known cabinetmakers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Their designs followed those of eighteenth-century England. Furniture made in this country before the Revolution is called "Colonial," because America was still a colony then. The term "Federal" is applied to furniture made after the Revolution, when America had broken her ties with England and had set up a federated state. The main distinction between Colonial and Federal furniture is that in Federal styles the American eagle is extensively used for decoration.



Of the three cabinetmakers mentioned above, Duncan Phyfe is by far the most famous. He was born in Scotland in 1768 and came to America to seek his fortune. He designed and made furniture for the homes of the first American

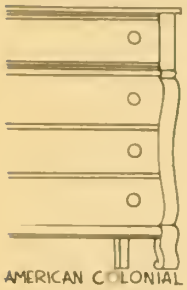




AMERICAN EMPIRE

millionaires; the daughter of John Jacob Astor was one of his important customers. Up to the time of the Civil War, his styles were eminently popular. The twentieth century has revived and widely reproduced Duncan Phyfe styles. Their principal characteristics are

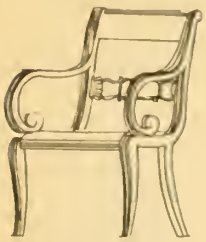
1. Lyre-shaped chair backs and pedestal bases for small tables
2. Dining tables with pedestal bases and round tables with saber-shaped, flared legs
3. Sofas with straight backs and cornucopia legs



AMERICAN COLONIAL

ENGLISH REGENCY, 1810–1820

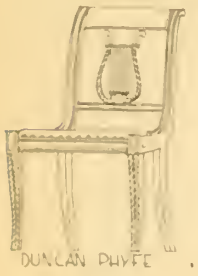
The young Prince of Wales, who later became George IV, was for a time regent of England, because his father was mentally unfit to rule. Furniture made during his regime was strongly influenced by the classic designs popular in Napoleonic France. However, it was simpler and more refined than its French Empire counterpart and had not the weight and heavy dignity of the latter. Stars, laurels, and feathers were among the decorative motifs used. Today's reproductions of English Regency pieces are highly prized. They are found chiefly in formal living and dining rooms.



ENGLISH REGENCY

VICTORIAN ERA, 1837–1901

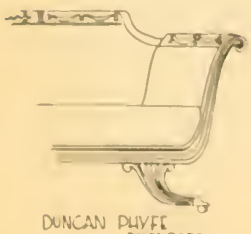
Victorian furniture, with its flowing curves and shortened cabriole legs, was a less formal version of the styles of Louis XV and English Regency. The popularity of home-loving Queen Victoria was responsible for the vogue it enjoyed both in England and America. It was widely used also because it was easily adapted to machine production and was the first furniture to appear in mass.



DUNCAN PHYFE

The fussy clutter of Victorian rooms has today been replaced by a more discriminating and selective use of inherited pieces. During World War II, when all furniture was scarce, homemakers "discovered" Victorian styles. Many cherished examples of Victorian sofas, settees, armchairs, and rockers were found in secondhand and antique shops. For those who favor sentimental tradition, such pieces will continue to be well liked. Spiked with gay colors and lovely accessories, Victorian rooms can have great charm.

DUNCAN PHYFE TABLE

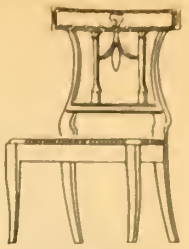


DUNCAN PHYFE DAVENPORT

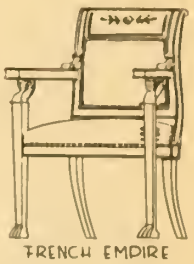
ENGLISH REGENCY

ENGLISH REGENCY (MIRROR)

Shortly after the beginning of the twentieth century, Americans began to show an interest in foreign antiques. Great fortunes had been made since the Civil War, and these early millionaires were willing to spend money lavishly on beautiful possessions. They tired of the machine-made furniture that America was producing—a series of unprepossessing styles based on no true concepts of beauty. European travel became popular and American travelers began to discover the beautiful eighteenth-century furniture of France and England.


DIRECTOIRE

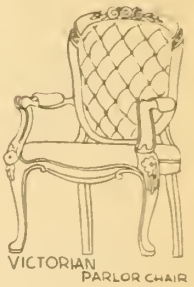
Among the first interior decorators in this country, who became prominent about 1900, was Elsie DeWolfe. She had lived abroad and was a great admirer of European traditions and fine furniture. She felt that the styles of the eighteenth century were particularly suitable for the fine homes of her wealthy patrons.

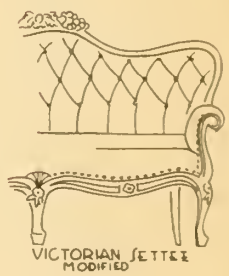

FRENCH EMPIRE

She started a trend which grew and spread to the furniture manufacturers of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and elsewhere. It was found that formal English and French type furniture was not only popular but easy to reproduce. The manufacturers had long been searching for new styles but were cautious about creating any original ones themselves. Elsie DeWolfe gave them the answer. Since that time, eighteenth-century furniture has remained secure in the affections of thousands of Americans.

VICTORIAN STYLE TABLE

Today there are many reproductions and interpretations of eighteenth-century English styles which are called "Traditional" or "Georgian." Some of these chairs, sofas, desks, chests, and tables are simplified versions of those designed by the great cabinetmakers of the golden era of decoration. Others are smaller in scale than the original pieces from which they are copied. However, this is an advantage in our smaller rooms. Still others are awkward copies or overornamented adaptations of the antiques they attempt to imitate. The use of cheap woods with shiny finishes and machine carving detracts from the beauty that was inherent in the original pieces. The chapter on Construction will help you to recognize the elements of good quality. The more closely a reproduction or adaptation follows the material, proportions, and detail of a genuine antique piece, the better its lines and quality will be. A knowledge of the characteristics of good eighteenth-century English furniture will be a guide and a guarantee in all your selections.


VICTORIAN PARLOR CHAIR


VICTORIAN SETTEE MODIFIED

CHAPTER FOUR

Informal Traditional Styles

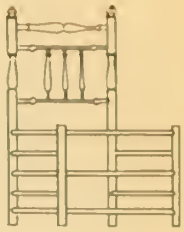
THE STORY OF FURNITURE

Two of the great style categories into which today's furniture falls are a part of our national heritage. One is the Traditional, or formal, category of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which we know will remain steadfastly popular. The other is the Provincial, or informal, category which we inherit from our earliest era. The word "Provincial" itself means "of the country." Quite naturally, there is a sympathetic feeling among all Provincial styles.

Four kinds of Provincial, or informal, styles are favored by American homemakers today. Originally every one stemmed from a foreign source. They are the Early American style, used by the English settlers in New England; the Pennsylvania Dutch style, which came from Germany; the French Provincial style, native to France; and the Spanish Mexican style, influenced both by the tastes of the conquistadors and of the Indians of Mexico. This last style is suitable for the Southwest and Western regions of our country. The others can be used in town or country, in small or large homes, with perfect taste. All of them can truthfully be called "Early American," because they were introduced in this country by the first colonists. However, through common usage, the term "Early American" has come to be applied only to the style developed by the first settlers of New England. It was common from the time of their arrival until almost a hundred years later, when the colonies were flourishing.

EARLY AMERICAN

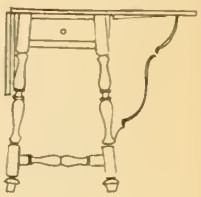
When the Pilgrims set sail from England, their cup of woe was overflowing. They had been politically and religiously oppressed, and the indolence of James I, followed by the chicanery of Charles I, had driven them out. Those who left England were from all walks and stations of life. They stopped in the Netherlands on their slow progress to the New World to await the arrival of other members of their band. Here a great many of them, who had been artisans



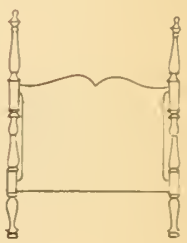
and laborers at home, "hired out" to various trades. This contact with the styles and customs of another country had its effect upon the English travelers. Dutch furnishings of the time had been influenced by those of the surrounding countries. The Dutch themselves were a thrifty, home-loving, and comfort-loving people. It was only natural that the visiting cabinetmakers should unconsciously adopt some of their designs. One of these, the straight-backed, square chair with spindles across the back, was seen particularly often among the Pilgrims' earliest efforts in our country.

Because little or no furniture was brought over in the *Mayflower*, the first settlers had to make their own. Furthermore, it was needed for immediate use. They cut logs, split planks, and planed them smooth. Then they made chests in which to store their worldly goods. (The chest is an especially interesting piece of furniture, because it has kept growing and changing in stature as man has accumulated more possessions. With the increase of material things, the chest doubled in size, a drawer was added at the bottom, and a lid placed on top. It continued to grow, until it was so high that the lid was useless and the present-day chiffonier appeared. From its lowly beginning as a mere trunk, the chest has become the credenza, the highboy, the commode, the wardrobe, and the modern chest of drawers.)

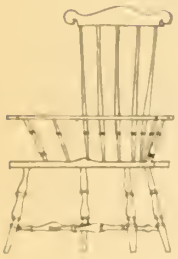
At the same time they built chests, the Pilgrims also made stools, settles, trestle and drop-leaf tables, and beds. Of course they had no bedsprings, so they fashioned wooden slats. Each bed had thick curtains to shut out drafts in the miserably cold, tiny bedrooms. The woods used were the native pine, oak, maple, and cherry. This furniture was of the simplest type, practical and utilitarian. From the very first—although structurally it favored the Jacobean furniture they had left behind in England—it had a definite Pilgrim spirit. The men who made it had neither the time nor the taste for ornamentation, but the simple turnings and wooden spindles they carved in the evening by the firelight were refined and beautiful. It is the stark simplicity of such work that appeals to us even today.



Later, as prosperity grew in the colonies, craftsmen from England were attracted to the new country. Shipbuilding and fishing developed as native industries and helped the little communities to prosper. Gradually the battle for existence diminished, and life became less grim. A note of gaiety began to appear in the dress and festivities of the settlers. Their homes became brighter. Housewives had time to make rugs and curtains. In the larger houses, rooms



Early American trestle table and benches favoring Jacobean style.



were painted in bright colors. Soon the flowing curves of the Queen Anne style of furniture started to influence the cabinetmakers' designs. The somber stiffness of the Jacobean lines was replaced by the shell carving and cabriole leg characteristic of her reign. Windsor and slat-back chairs were used extensively. Walnut replaced maple and pine in the making of fine pieces. Comfort, grace, and elegance became the order of the day. Provincial America was growing into Colonial America.

If you are furnishing a home today in Early American furniture you may accent it charmingly by using chintzes with small all-over patterns or old-fashioned floral designs for the draperies, upholstery, and slip covers. Homespun types of material are equally good. The walls may either be paneled in rubbed wood or covered with papers in small patterns, similar to those of the chintzes. On the floors, rag, hooked, or braided rugs are in keeping, as well as

some Modern cotton rugs—the so-called "oatmeal" mixtures or rugs with a low-clipped, shaggy pile. If your floor boards are of random widths and waxed, so much the better. If not, have them painted or stained in a muted, dark shade to harmonize with the room colors. In selecting accessories, the oldest and most primitive you can find will suit your rooms the best. Lamps made of pottery jugs, pewter or brass candlesticks, pieces of "milk" glass, and reproductions of early Sandwich glass all belong in an Early American interior.

On the walls, samplers (you can make copies of old ones yourself), Currier-and-Ives prints, and rural pictures in water colors or oils of the Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood school are appropriate. Benton and Wood are both twentieth-century American painters. The latter loved the Middle West—its rolling fields of corn and wheat, its farmers, and its farm life. He chose to paint them in a flat, "primitive" style, which is beautifully simple. The former has the same affection for the rugged rural life but paints his subjects in sharper focus, with a greater use of light and shadow. Pictures by either of these artists suit the plain austerity of the early Provincial furniture.

Early American bedrooms can be made to adhere to the decorative charms of the past by the use of candlewick spreads, dark blue-and-white or red-and-white hand-woven coverlets, or patchwork quilts. The colors our ancestors made from vegetables and fruits are still beautiful today against the lovely warmth of cherry, maple, or birch furniture. They are russet brown, cranberry red, mustard yellow, and dull olive green.

An amazing variety of pieces of Early American furniture can now be obtained in all stores. You will have no trouble in finding complete equipment for a comfortable, attractive, informal home in this style. Reproductions come in several finishes. The finest are a light brown, almost the shade of maple-sugar candy, sometimes called "toast" color. Today's most authentic and least adulterated reproductions are finished in this hue. A reddish finish is used on certain low-priced pieces in the Early American style. The design of these has been stripped of its beauty, and they are made of cheap wood and covered by an ugly, shiny lacquer. Do not be confused by them or attracted by their seeming economy. An investment in pieces of this sort has no permanent value.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH

Because of persecution at home, a group of people fled from Europe to the New World and sought a haven where they could live as free individuals. They

Pewters and primitive pottery against rubbed-wood paneling in an Early American setting.

Small all-over florals and hooked rugs in a Provincial interior. *(Courtesy of Better Homes and Gardens.)*

Oval braided rugs over random-width flooring in an Early American living-dining room. *(Courtesy of The American Home.)*

Hooked rug companioned by fireside chairs covered in small all-over floral chintz.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

Candlewick spread on a four-post bed in a Provincial bedroom.

Floral hooked rug with a tiny-patterned Provincial wallpaper in a maple bedroom.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

Pennsylvania Dutch chest and bedspread in tulip design. *(Courtesy of The American Home.)*

Bucks County Provincial inspired by original Pennsylvania Dutch pieces, designed by Bevelacqua.

(Courtesy of Americana Furniture, Inc.)

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Bucks County Provincial inspired by original Pennsylvania Dutch pieces, designed by Bevelacqua.

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came from the banks of the Rhine River, in Germany. By arrangement with William Penn and his English followers, they were permitted to land at Philadelphia and establish farms in Pennsylvania. They were a soberly clad group, whose religion demanded that they lead austere personal lives. Yet they felt they were entitled to enjoy the natural beauty of the new, free country. Hence their homes, inside and out, were painted in the gayest colors. Deep blue, tomato red, butter yellow, dark pink, and white decorated their houses, barns, wagons, and garden walls. They covered everything with German peasant motifs, such as the wheel of fortune, the tulip, the heart, and the four-leaf clover. These were painted on barn walls to "hex" the spells of witches and were used as designs for weather vanes, objects of decorative ironwork, and patterns for patchwork quilts.

The furniture of this group—"Pennsylvania Dutch"—has the same solid simplicity as that of the New Englanders; but, of course, it was painted in lovely colors and decorated with their primitive designs. It included settees, beds, stools, tables, dressers, chests, and corner cupboards. Today we think of Early American and Pennsylvania Dutch pieces in the same bracket. Because of their simplicity, they can be used together in any informal room.

Pennsylvania Dutch styles are most appropriate in houses whose architecture is informal—Dutch Colonial or ranch-house Modern homes or Cape Cod cottages. They can also be used in small city apartments. The same accessories and colors go with Pennsylvania Dutch furniture as with Early American. However, you may add gay Dutch colors and motifs. Pennsylvania Dutch wallpapers and printed cottons are available and provide bright accents for the painted furniture if used with skill. For instance, pale yellow walls with dull red or blue woodwork are lovely. For your windows, use sash curtains printed in heart or tulip designs or plain white tieback curtains. Floors may be covered with brilliantly colored rag rugs.

FRENCH PROVINCIAL

During the eighteenth century, when our own country was young, almost all important European countries had a Provincial type of furniture. The elaborate and sophisticated styles we have discussed so far were peculiar to city, town, and palace. The ruler of each country determined the fashions of his day. Inevitably, his citizens—men of more humble origin and leaner purse—wished to copy the fine possessions of the rich and royal. A craftsman from the country

French Provincial living room with hand-rubbed fruit-wood chairs and tables. (*Courtesy of The American Home.*)

French Provincial wing chair and armchair covered in French Provincial fabrics. *(Courtesy of Morgan Furniture Co.)*

Today's interpretation of French Provincial. *(Courtesy of Drexel Furniture Co.)*

Today's interpretation of French Provincial. *(Courtesy of Drexel Furniture Co.)*

Southwest Provincial. *(Courtesy of Louise Rennie, decorator.)*

would make a journey to the city and look at the beautiful, new furniture. With his limited tools and local woods, he would then attempt to copy what he had seen. His copies were usually extremely simple reproductions of elaborate court pieces. With the necessary simplification, however, he usually added a certain charm.

In this way native cabinetmakers furnished the homes of the farmers, the manor houses, and the cottages of France during the reigns of Louis XIV, XV, and XVI. Structurally, their pieces were the same as the elaborate court styles, only a trifle heavier. Whereas the latter were painted or gilded and highly carved, the copies were made in beautiful fruit woods and were hand rubbed. Some of the most lovely had the cabriole leg of Louis XV. They included dressers, chests, chairs, armoires (wardrobes), beds, tables, settees, and desks.

Today we can combine French Provincial furniture with Early American and give spice to any room. A house furnished entirely in French Provincial can also be charming. French Provincial pieces are good in small or large homes or in city apartments. They should have very informal backgrounds. Small-patterned floral chintzes, checked ginghams, percales, and calicoes are appropriate, as well as the famous *toiles de Jouy* of France. These last are cottons covered with scenic prints of French country life. Usually they have a cream-colored ground with a design printed in a lovely muted shade of mauve, raspberry red, dark blue, or green. They were originally made in a factory at Jouy near Versailles.

Other fabrics that look well in a French Provincial room are nubby cottons and wools in plain or herringbone weaves. Cotton or linen rugs in tweedlike mixtures make good floor coverings. The choice of accessories is most important. Pieces of copper or old pewter, earthenware decorated with primitive French figures, flower or bird or fruit prints are all in keeping. So are tole lamps. These are made of metal and painted in bright colors. Among the many other decorative and useful items in painted tole are trays, cigarette boxes, wastebaskets, and flowerpots.

There is likely not to be so broad a choice of French Provincial furnishings as of Early American. The largest selections may be found in the big stores of large cities. Here you will see bedroom pieces, dining-room groups, sofas, chairs, and tables for living rooms. Such French Provincial furniture as is available is in the moderately high-priced bracket. It is well made of fruit woods, chestnut, or maple in natural finishes. A few of the pieces may be lacquered in pastel colors. Always in good taste, French Provincial makes an attractive and comfortable informal home.

Gaily decorated chest and hand-woven rug in Southwest setting.

(Courtesy of Louise Rennie, decorator.)

Chest and bed painted in brilliant desert colors against chalk-white walls.

(Courtesy of Louise Rennie, decorator.)

SOUTHWEST AMERICAN AND SPANISH MEXICAN

In our Far West, the early Spaniards left their mark upon the succeeding generations as truly as did the wayfaring English along the New England coast. The style of decorating they bequeathed to us is a hearty mixture of Spanish, Mexican, and Indian, with a dash of French. It belongs definitely to the desert, the plains, and semitropical, sun-drenched regions. It is most incongruous for interiors in Detroit, Chicago, or New York. In fact, for any part of the country where heating apparatus is necessary, it does not serve.

When the early Franciscan monks spread the gospel in California, they erected missions and churches in the image of those they had left behind them. Only they built with native adobe materials. They fashioned beautiful, lacy iron grillwork and painted frescoes which were reminiscent of Spain. For their interiors, they made simple, hand-hewn, leather-backed chairs, dignified oak refectory tables, and finely carved, painted beds. The resulting atmosphere sug-

gested the Renaissance. To it the Mexicans and Indians added lusty colors, with painted tin lamps, mirror frames, lanterns, bright pottery, and textured rugs in primitive patterns.

Today, ranch houses, which resemble old Mexican or Spanish haciendas, and Modern one-story houses can use this Spanish Mexican style. White walls and tiled floors are the correct background. Fabrics should be richly colored and blended—bright red, terra cotta, pumpkin yellow, deep blue, gray, and orange, combined in various weaves and textures. If possible, try hand-woven rugs, homespun fabrics for upholstery, and hand-blocked linens printed in large designs, inspired by the wonderful shapes of the desert cacti. Accessories may be intricately carved tin mirrors, shadow boxes, candlesticks, and lanterns. This gay and romantic style can be very dramatic in its proper setting.

In many Western stores you can find examples of heavy, simple furniture, made of oak or redwood and stained brown or painted off-white. It has cushions of heavy canvas, dyed in vivid desert colors. This is sometimes called "Monterey" furniture and may be used inside the house, in a patio, or on a terrace. It is attractive and not too expensive. There are chairs, settees, chaise longues on wheels, love seats, and tables. This furniture may be combined charmingly with many old Spanish or Mexican pieces. Because of its primitive appearance, some simple Modern things such as low lounge chairs and coffee tables, may also be used with this furniture. It is a rugged style, which belongs only in sunny climates where living is casual and informal the year round.

CHAPTER FIVE

Modern or Contemporary Styles

THE STORY OF FURNITURE

Modern is the term every era applies to its own creations. The stately Georgian homes of eighteenth-century England were modern when they were built. The simple wooden-gabled houses of New England were modern in their day. Down in the Carolinas, Maryland, and Virginia, the planters built beautiful Colonial houses which copied the Georgian style. They, too, were modern. After the Civil War, it was typical of the new millionaires of America that they wanted something brand new—something that made no compromise with the past. Hence the gingerbread atrocities that were committed in the name of Victoria and that still exist today in many sections of our land.

With the advent of the machine, why did we feel the need for new expression, a new art form in our furnishings? It was because creative design had not kept pace with manufacturing progress. The furniture styles at the beginning of the twentieth century were glaring examples of bad taste. Think of the brass beds and the mission-oak furniture of the 1900's! They were the last weak links with the old century and served to show what the machine was capable of. Rebellion against old styles on the one hand and the influence of new designs in architecture on the other brought about the birth of Modern.

Throughout the ages, furniture has been influenced by architecture. When rooms were built with high ceilings, the furniture was tall. When buildings were square in shape and size, so was the furniture. Therefore it was inevitable that when architects began to build houses that were low and spread out horizontally, furniture should follow along the same lines.

Today's Modern styles can scarcely be called new. They appeared as early as 1912 in Europe. Up to the time of the first international exhibit of Modern furniture, held in Paris in 1926, they were called "Moderne" or "Modernistic." These first efforts were grotesque and strange according to today's standards of beauty and taste. They were mainly characterized by gigantic proportions and bizarre geometric designs. There was a great deal of metal pipe used with assorted kinds of wood. Above all, they showed a revolt against established forms, customs, and artistic principles.

Actually, the creation of Modern furniture began in several countries in central Europe at the same time. Everywhere young designers were trying to escape from the dominance of the past and to give the future a new ideal in furniture; just as in art, architecture, and music, the painter, the architect, and the composer were all striving to produce new forms. Furthermore, the designers of furniture wished to create something original which would be truly expressive of the Machine Age.

Like all radical changes, whether artistic or social, this trend began in extremes and gradually became more moderate. The fantastic furniture of the early era is no longer considered suitable for our homes. Art Moderne and Modernistic died an early death and have now been replaced by functional Modern, or Contemporary, styles. Functional Modern furniture is the work of designers whose eyes are on today's living and the needs of Contemporary homes. "Functional" means simply that each piece is designed primarily to fulfill the purpose for which it is intended. A chair must be well built and comfortable to sit on. A bed must be designed for sleeping, with the maximum of comfort for the amount of space it is to occupy. A chest must provide adequate storage space for the things it is to hold. Ornamentation and elaboration have no place in functional furniture. Its beauty depends on its proportions, its inherent artistic line, and the natural appeal of the materials of which it is made. For example, a Modern chest will be lovely because of its simplicity of design and because of the color and texture of the wood of which it is made.

There is one type of Modern you will see that may be called "Transitional." It is frankly based on styles that have preceded it. Usually, it consists of simplified Traditional forms, with the addition of new combinations of upholstery and natural or bleached-wood finishes. A Duncan Phyfe dining group in bleached wood with textured pastel chair seats is an example of Transitional Modern.

At the Paris Exposition of 1937, some simply designed Modern furniture made in Sweden created a tremendous furor. American buyers copied it and called it "Swedish Modern." Today furniture like it, which is well adapted to our present-day living, is called just "Modern." Its style depends chiefly on graceful proportions, natural wood finishes, and upholstery fabrics woven in interesting textures.

In the final analysis, Modern is today's development of the simple, fundamental lines that have always characterized furniture in good taste. It is no longer bulky and angular, as it was a few years ago. It has lightness and grace.

(Courtesy of Mengel Co.)

Informal Modern. Flexible units designed by Morris Sanders.

(Courtesy of Tapp, Inc.)

Formal Transitional Modern designed by Robert Dorr, Jr.

(Courtesy of Dunbar Furniture Co.)

Formal Modern buffet designed by Edward Wormley.

(Courtesy of Widdicomb Furniture Co.)

Informal dual-purpose chest designed by Robsjohn-Gibbings. Combination storage unit and dressing table.

Transitional Modern in light finish based on designs of the past. *(Courtesy of Tomlinson of High Point, Inc.)*

Sectional Modern sofa arranged to fit corner of room. *(Courtesy of Grand Rapids Furniture Makers Guild)*

Curved sectional sofa arranged to fit a curved bay. *(Courtesy of Paul MacAlister and The American Home.)*

Dual-purpose coffee table. *(Courtesy of Robert Dorr, Jr.)*

Coffee table converted into dining table. *(Courtesy of Robert Dorr, Jr.)*

Flexible chest units showing versatility of Modern design. *(Courtesy of Mengel Co.)*

A group of chest units designed by George Nelson. *(Courtesy of Herman Miller Furniture Co.)*

(Courtesy of Carson, Pirie, Scott and Co.)

Smooth surfaces and simplicity of design add up to easy care. Designed by Hans Knoll.

Coffee table with top of wedge-shaped textured glass and center plant container in a group designed by Paul Laszlo. *(Courtesy of Herman Miller Furniture Co.)*

Multi-purpose slatted bench holds chests and serves also as a low table. *(Courtesy of Herman Miller Furniture Co.)*

Modern geometric print affords dramatic background for furniture designed by Hans Knoll.
(Courtesy of Carson, Pirie, Scott and Co.)

Modern setting designed for gracious living by Edward Wormley. *(Courtesy of Dunbar Furniture Co.)*

Sectional sofa suitable for a corner group with pull-up chair specially proportioned for a woman

(Courtesy of Morgan Furniture Co.)

Note the practical step end tables and the two-tiered extension-top coffee table. *(Courtesy of Morgan Furniture Co.)*

The absence of elaborate detail makes it easy to care for. Its good proportions and smaller scale are planned especially so the pieces fit the wall spaces of our smaller rooms without a feeling of crowding. An outstanding characteristic of Modern is its utility. Chests of simple Modern design look equally well in living room, dining room, or bedroom. They can be combined with smaller chests to form breakfronts, cabinets, desks, dressing tables, and china cabinets. They can be combined vertically (one on top of the other) or horizontally (side by side).

Sections of sofas can be arranged to fit the corner of a room, or they can be rearranged to make a pair of love seats or a love seat with a pair of chairs. Small square tables can be combined to make larger tables. Today's living requires streamlined efficiency. That is why Modern furniture is flexible and interchangeable. It makes the most advantageous use of the space in any room.

Those who think Modern furniture belongs only in a city apartment are mistaken. It can be equally at home in a country cottage. It is particularly appropriate wherever space must be saved and simplicity in housekeeping is a necessity. You may want Modern furniture all through your new home. Perhaps you will prefer to confine it to one or two rooms. Or you may want to combine a few new Modern pieces with Traditional or Provincial furniture. Today's Modern styles belong in any American house. You can buy functional Modern with pride, knowing that it is sound American design, built to satisfy contemporary demands for comfort, style, economy of space, and easy maintenance.

How has the modern tempo of life affected home furnishings? More than ever before, after the motion and speed of the day's work, we want our homes to be restful and comfortable. You will notice that a certain type of Modern chair and sofa is designed lower to the ground each year. It invites relaxation and lounging ease, two primary requirements of modern life. The high vertical chair of the Renaissance expressed dignity and formality. The low Modern chair is made for genuine comfort and informality. The low coffee table within easy reach, the end table that matches in height the arms of the sofa—both are designed for practical comfort. There is no stiffness about Modern styles.

Another need of contemporary homes is efficiency and ease of care. The elimination of all carving, the simplified details of Modern furniture have reduced today's household chores. Think how easy it is to dust the smooth surface of a Modern table compared to the fretwork of a Chinese Chippendale piece! This simplicity in design appeals to the woman who does her own work, just as does the well-equipped modern kitchen, which reduces the number of steps and motions she must make in preparing a meal.

Modern styles have outgrown the awkwardness of adolescence and attained maturity of line and proportion. Modern furniture appears to its best advantage in Modern architectural settings, because the two are sympathetic. Each was designed to go with the other. The colors of Modern fabrics and wallpapers are fresh and clear, suggesting daylight and sunshine even at night. The textures of finely grained wood, the beauty of nubby woven materials, all give Modern an appeal which is universal.

Because of its universal quality, Modern is very adaptable. It can be combined with certain types of Provincial furniture and with simple Transitional or Traditional things. Furthermore, a Modern interior may be enhanced by the use of certain antique accessories. Chinese pottery, lacquer, and paintings have

a definite affinity for it. In fact, there are many Modern pieces that are distinctly Chinese in flavor. In a very informal Modern room, the artwares of Mexico also look well. Mexican pottery, tin, lacquer, and hand-woven sarapes will add color and charm to any simple contemporary setting.

Modern furniture can be used with cotton rugs in subtle or brilliant hues, with shaggy piles or with woven textures. Designed to match its natural wood tones are wonderfully colored woven fabrics, by world-renowned weavers. There are also beautifully printed cottons in Modern freehand-drawn patterns and new plastic and coated materials in a variety of colors, textures, and designs. These last will be a boon to housewives, because they need only be wiped off with a damp cloth.

Modern furniture is to be found in all stores. It comes in low-, medium- and high-priced brackets. Naturally, the quality is better in the higher priced levels. However, there are some pitfalls—big ones—in all the price ranges. Beware of pieces designed in the grotesque manner known as "waterfall Modern." They are in the worst possible taste. Bulky in size, they have curved fronts covered with poorly drawn inlays and designs. Often these pieces are further vulgarized by mirror trim and decorations. The juke box is an outstanding example of "waterfall Modern."

Beautiful and authentic Modern is as simple as can be. If the piece is large, such as a chest or desk, it is in excellent proportion and has a clear, natural finish. Chairs and sofas are equally simple in design and are not massively built. Some of the newest chairs are made of bentwood or plywood, light in weight and curved to fit the contours of the body. Coffee tables are in free Modern forms, which add an interesting pattern to a Modern room. The longer you live with Modern that has the integrity of sound, simple design, the deeper your affection for it will grow. Because it supplies a smooth and easy background for even the fastest pace, Modern design suits today's way of life.

CHAPTER SIX

What Goes with What?

MIXING DIFFERENT furniture styles is not a new idea, because periods have always naturally mixed themselves. One style flowed into the next. Our great-great-grandmothers did not throw out the Chippendale chairs they inherited, just because they were buying some of the new "modern" furniture made by Mr. Duncan Phyfe. Instead, they mixed the new with the old. If you choose to do this today, plan to bear the following basic rules in mind.

1. Place together only those styles which are the same in feeling or spirit. Formal styles should go with formal styles, and informal ones with informal.

Example: Louis XV may be used with Chippendale and Adam; or Duncan Phyfe with Louis XVI.

Decorator Dorothy Draper combines formal French eighteenth-century furniture with formal hand-woven Modern fabrics designed by Dorothy Liebes.

Warning: Do not group formal Chippendale with Pennsylvania Dutch or Provincial Early American; and do not think that the brilliantly colored, half-rustic style of the American Southwest can go with Adam or Sheraton.

Furniture like Chippendale, Louis XVI, and Louis XV, made of mahogany or walnut, satin-finished, and decorated with fine carving and rich ornamentation, calls for a fabric of luxurious design and texture, such as satin, velvet, brocade, and damask. Pieces in the less ornamented, more restrained styles of Sheraton and Hepplewhite may have coverings of textured wool, cotton, or rayon.

The informal woods—maple, pine, oak, and fruit woods—suggest an informal spirit. They bring to mind gay Pennsylvania Dutch colors and the simplicity of homespun materials such as denim, sailcloth, calico, and chintz in small Provincial designs.

2. Among the important factors in any decorative mixture are scale and proportion. Always place together pieces that are in scale with one another. Regardless of period, do not place a delicate end table beside an elephantine sofa, and do not combine a slim side chair with a large important-looking commode. They will definitely be out of scale with one another. By the same token, do not fill a room with furniture that has all curved lines or all straight lines. Too many curves give one the illusion of going around in circles; too many straight lines suggest a feeling of angular discomfort and rigidity.

3. When planning to mix periods, do not have equal amounts of all the periods used. This would be deadly dull, to say the least. The same principle applies to the blending of woods in a room. Also, when mixing light with dark pieces, be sure they are of the same degree of formality. One lovely bleached-mahogany Transitional desk or chest can provide a smart accent to a Traditional eighteenth-century living room. However, do not try to harmonize fine mahogany with pickled oak. They do not mix any more than golf shoes with an evening dress.

In the formal category, it is permissible to mix period pieces in straight lines—such as Sheraton, Hepplewhite, or Duncan Phyfe—with Modern furniture in bleached mahogany, leather-covered chests, and pieces that are Chinese in flavor. They all have an affinity in line, design, and scale. In fact, nothing is more guaranteed to make a beautiful room than the skillful blending of past and present.

A gracious blending of period pieces in perfect scale with one another.

An important Modern piece in bleached wood can provide a smart accent in a Traditional eighteenth-century living room.

(Courtesy of Grand Rapids Furniture Makers Guild)

An unequal mixture of light and dark pieces in the same degree of formality makes an attractive room setting. *(Courtesy of Warner Bros.)*

A mixture of Modern tables with Traditional upholstered pieces. *(Courtesy of Tomlinson of High Point, Inc.)*

4. Many people want to know if Modern furniture can go with period pieces. Indeed it can. For example, in a dining room with a bleached-mahogany Duncan Phyfe table (Transitional Modern), you could have an old fruit-wood chest with a plain or marble top for a buffet. Transitional Modern chairs with leather seats would also fit. Even a small dark mahogany console table against a wall would add charm to the room, used as a decorative and functional piece.

In one living room where the color scheme was built around a collection of Modern pictures, a most delightful result was obtained. All the upholstered furniture was simple Modern and covered in textured hand-woven fabrics of interesting weaves and rich colors. A shaggy pile rug concealed the floor, and Modern woven draperies hung at the window.

The wood furniture consisted of fine reproductions of eighteenth-century styles—all lovely in color and design. There was a bleached-wood breakfront cabinet, a drum-topped table with bookshelves below, several end tables, and a grand piano. The accessories in the room—including ash trays, cigarette boxes, and vases—were a strangely diversified group of Modern and old designs. However, they had one thing in common; they were equally good in line and quality. Here was an example of mixing accessories, both antique and new, with Modern and Traditional pieces of undoubted value. Because of the choice of colors, fabrics, and details, the feeling of the room was unified and beautiful.

5. People sometimes wonder if it is advisable, in the interests of good taste, to mix furniture that comes from different countries. This can be done easily and successfully if furniture from a contemporary period in the history of each country is used. For example, it is possible to combine Early American, French Provincial, and Pennsylvania Dutch in a single living room. The main pieces can be Early American. To these add a gaily painted chest and one or two straight chairs in the Pennsylvania Dutch style, and the room will be complete—charming, informal, and homey.

6. Another easy way to merge periods in furniture is to choose those that follow one another chronologically. Let us say you wish to use eighteenth-century furniture with some nineteenth-century pieces. The simple, straight-lined designs of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton go beautifully with English Regency and Duncan Phyfe styles.

7. Many rooms that contain a mixture of styles can be unified by a simple color scheme. For instance, a room that has good basic furniture—such as a Victorian sofa, a barrel chair, a wing chair, Duncan Phyfe coffee and end tables,

a Sheraton breakfront, and a low, bow-front chest—may have gray walls and carpeting and a stunning floral fabric on chairs and sofa. Striped draperies in gray and one of the floral colors will complete the scheme.

If you have inherited pieces of nondescript or awkward furniture, it is best to discard them. Do not try to mix them with Traditional or Modern things in good design and scale. One ugly piece can spoil an attractive room.

A combination of Modern sectional upholstered pieces with tables in Traditional forms *(Courtesy of Tomlinson of High Point, Inc.)*

Gaily painted Mexican chairs may be used with informal American Modern table.

(Courtesy of R.K.O. art directors, Carroll Clark and Albert D'Agostino.)

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furniture combined harmoniously in an informal setting.

Modern and Traditional pieces unified effectively through a color scheme and a dramatic window treatment.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

This Brief Summary Tells You What Goes with What

1. INFORMAL MODERN STYLES

limed oak
pine
maple
birch

may be combined with

2. INFORMAL TRADITIONAL STYLES

Early American
French Provincial
Pennsylvania Dutch
Mexican
Southwest

3. TRANSITIONAL (FORMAL) MODERN STYLES

bleached walnut
bleached mahogany

may be combined with

4. FORMAL TRADITIONAL STYLES

English
- William and Mary (1688–1702)
- Queen Anne (1702–1714)
- Georgian (1714–1820)
  - Chippendale
  - Sheraton
  - Hepplewhite
  - Adam
- Regency (1811–1820)
- Empire (1820–1830)
- Victorian (1837–1901)

French
- Louis XIV (1643–1715)
- Louis XV (1715–1774)
- Louis XVI (1774–1793)
- Directoire (1795–1799)
- Empire (1799–1814)

American
- Colonial (1720–1776)
- Federal (1776–1789)
- Duncan Phyfe (1795–1847)

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Construction of Furniture

INTRODUCTION

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER runs the old saying. Or, to paraphrase, "The more you know about the furniture you buy, the better your investment will be protected." What do you want when you buy a chair or chest? You want good style. You want suitability and convenience. You want practicality and durability.

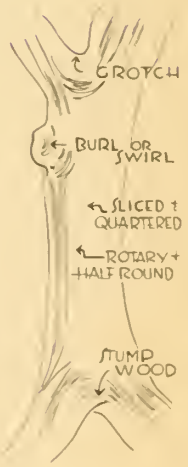
It is the style and design of a chair or chest that first attract your eye. Often a piece will sell if it has eye appeal alone. But the quality of the piece—the thing that determines its durability—is hidden in its construction. The wood of which it is made, how it is put together, the materials used in its upholstery, the kind of finish it has—these too are important. It is these elements which give it lasting value and account for its cost.

Not all people are interested in construction details. Many women are affected only by design. Most men, however, want to know something about quality and workmanship. The following facts will enable you to see not only the obvious eye appeal of a piece of furniture but also its hidden values. Armed with your knowledge, you will be able to buy more intelligently and get more satisfaction out of what you have bought.

WOODS

Wood is more suitable for furniture than any other material because

1. It has great natural beauty when well selected and finished.
2. It is hard, strong, durable, and light enough to handle.
3. It is available in quantity.
4. It is easy to work with and repair.



Woods used for furniture are divided into two groups—hardwoods and softwoods. Hardwoods have a greater beauty of grain and figure than softwoods. They are also more expensive, however, because they take a longer

time to grow. Trees that lose their leaves are hardwoods. The needle trees, or evergreens—like pine and cedar—are softwoods.

Hardwoods
(all native, except mahogany)

Gumwood—used more than any other wood, because it is one of the best hardwoods available at a low price. In solid form, it is used for the legs, posts, stretchers, frames, and supports of veneered furniture. Face veneers of gum are also very attractive.

Walnut—an ideal wood, because it combines the qualities of beauty, strength, and durability. It seasons well and has a lovely grain and color. Even in age it keeps its rich, mellow, brown tones.

Mahogany—(India, Africa, South America)—like walnut, one of the most popular furniture woods, because it has beauty, strength, and durability. On account of its high price and great value, mahogany is generally used in veneers alone. The pattern of the wood is carefully selected and matched to add decorative beauty to the fronts of chests, desks, and buffets. The solid parts of these pieces—legs, posts, and stretchers—are usually made of gum, which takes a mahogany finish.

Maple—used most often in reproductions of Early American furniture. It is one of the hardest of all native woods, wears well, and often has beautiful markings—wavy, curly, or bird's-eye. Maple is cheerful in color, ranging from a near-white to toast.

Birch—has all the characteristics of maple in hardness, color, and grain. It is frequently used as a substitute for maple.

Oak—a fine cabinet wood, known for its strength, solidity, and beauty. It is hard, resilient, easy to work with, and well adapted to a number of finishes, both light and dark.

Chestnut—somewhat like oak in color and texture. Because of its wormholes, it is not seen so much as oak. It is used most often as a core wood for veneered furniture.

Cherry—The fruit woods—apple, cherry, and pear—were used by the American colonists. In reproducing Early American furniture, cherry is often used today. It resembles maple in grain and figure. Its natural reddish-brown color mellows with age.

Ash—a desirable hardwood for the concealed frames of upholstered furniture. It is hard and strong, bends well, and does not warp easily.

Basswood—used as a core wood for veneers. It is also used for the tops of kitchen tables, drawer partitions, and other concealed parts of "case goods" (furniture made entirely of wood and containing drawers or cupboards).

Beech—a strong wood without interesting markings. It is used in concealed parts of furniture, such as frames and the dowels of joints.

Poplar—The even, hard texture of poplar makes it a good core wood for the crossbands in plywood and for the solid parts of furniture, such as the frames of upholstered chairs.

Elm—like poplar, used for chair frames, because it is strong and holds screws well.

Softwoods
(*all native*)

Red Cedar—used for mothproof chests.

Spruce—light in weight and strong. It dries easily, takes glue well, and makes a fine core wood.

Pine—related to spruce and has the same qualities. Because of its lightness and strength, it is easily dried and glued and makes fine core material. Also because of its economy, it is widely used for unpainted furniture.

Redwood—a native of California, known as the "Sequoia," or "Big Tree." It is most popular on the Pacific Coast. Veneers of redwood burls are used all over the country.

TYPES OF CONSTRUCTION

There are two types of case goods—solid and veneered. In solid furniture, every part is made of a single piece of wood. In veneered or plywood furniture, several layers of wood are glued together to form the top, sides, drawer fronts, and other exposed surfaces.

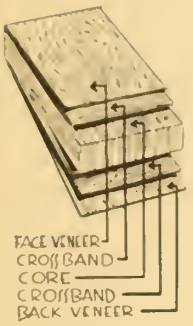
Solid Construction

The advantages of solid construction are

1. The surface of the piece may be marred or scratched without danger of the wood underneath revealing itself.

2. No matter how old or worn the piece is, the grain, or figure, of the wood does not change.
3. The surface will neither peel nor blister.
4. Refinishing can be done at low cost with beautiful results.
5. The piece will be suitable for carving.

Veneered Construction



In veneer, or plywood, there is a laminated surface consisting of layers of paper-thin wood called veneers, or plies, glued at right angles to each other and to the lumber base, which is known as the core. The face veneer, or top ply, usually has a highly figured grain. This gives style and beauty to the finished piece of furniture. For example, when the sections of the face veneer on the front of a buffet, chest, or desk are carefully matched in a swirl or feathered pattern, the effect is handsome in the extreme. Often the use of veneer will add lightness and delicacy to an otherwise heavy piece.

Some people think that veneered furniture is a cheap substitute for solid furniture. Actually, veneers have been used since the days of King Tut of Egypt. Many of the finest antiques in our museums—pieces that have stood the test of time—are veneered, and veneers were very popular among the famous cabinetmakers of the eighteenth century. Today, strong glues and hot presses make them almost indestructible. The fact that plywood is used in airplane construction attests this fact. Most of the best Modern case goods combine solid posts and rails with veneered tops, backs, sides, and fronts.

Mahogany and walnut have every good quality—style, strength, and durability. However, solid pieces made from these woods are very costly. Therefore, mahogany or walnut veneers are used over less costly woods to make furniture of great beauty, which is within the reach of the average income.

CONSTRUCTION OF CASE GOODS

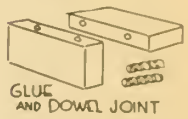
To many people, furniture is a lifetime investment. For this reason, they want chests, desks, and buffets that will be well constructed, substantial, and long wearing.

One of the important details to note in buying furniture is how the flat surfaces of wood are joined to each other. There are five usual types of joints:

1. The plain *glue*, or *rub*, *joint* is the most common and the easiest to manufacture. It is used on the ends and tops of cases. Simply, it means the two surfaces are glued together. This is not a strong or durable type of construction. It is found in lower priced furniture and in unpainted pieces.

2. The *tongue-and-groove joint* makes for stronger construction. A piece of wood has a projection, or tongue, which fits directly into a groove in the opposite piece of wood and is secured by powerful glue.

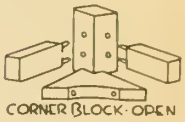
3. In the *double-groove-and-tongue joint*, two pieces of wood, each with a groove, are held together by a loose tongue of hardwood, inserted in the grooves and glued strongly.

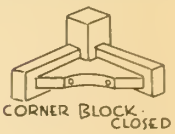


4. In the *dowel joint*, two surfaces of wood are glued and also fastened together by a series of dowels inserted into them.

5. The *mortise-and-tenon joint* is, with the dowel joint, the strongest kind of joint. One piece of wood is cut to a depth of about 1 inch, leaving a projection, or tenon. This tenon is then swabbed with glue and inserted into a mortise, or hole, of equal size in the opposite piece of wood.

Corner blocks are used in case goods, tables, and chairs to reinforce both dowel and mortise-and-tenon joints. They are triangular blocks of wood, notched to fit corners (for instance, those found where posts are screwed to rails). They prevent joints from cracking under great pressure. Almost all furniture of good construction has corner blocks for added strength.





CONSTRUCTION OF BUFFETS, DRESSERS, CHESTS, DESKS, AND TABLES

The ends and back of most case goods are made of three or five layers of plywood. Corner posts are grooved to receive these panels and are mortised for the drawer guides, front rails, and stretchers. Corner blocks and straight blocks are used to provide rigidity. Two-piece, side drawer guides help assure smooth-running drawers. In furniture of better quality, center drawer guides are used in place of side guides. A center guide equalizes the weight of a drawer, so that it can be opened and closed easily with one hand. You should always investigate the type of guides used before you buy case goods. Dustproof panels between drawers are another feature to look for, because they prevent dust from seeping from one drawer to the next and make the case more rigid.

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DRAWER CONSTRUCTION

All good drawers are made of seasoned wood, which can withstand changes in temperature and humidity without swelling or shrinking. The interiors are well sanded so that they will not snag or catch clothing. In all but the cheapest furniture, the interiors are sprayed with a transparent lacquer which protects the wood and makes it easier to clean. The front corners of drawers are dovetailed. Look for the triangular-shaped teeth that fit into each other tightly and are strongly glued. They make for neat corners which will not pull out, and also prevent warping and ensure easy sliding. All drawers should be glue-blocked on the underside for added support and strength.

FINISHES FOR WOOD FURNITURE

The natural beauty of wood is an important part of the decorative appeal of furniture. To preserve this natural beauty, a finish must be applied to it. The quality of the finish depends on the processes involved. Hand rubbing is the secret of a fine polish. Be sure to avoid finishes that are too highly varnished or uneven in color and texture. They may blister or peel, and they tend to conceal the pattern of the wood.

HOW TO KNOW GOOD FURNITURE

Before you buy, you will be interested in knowing what determines the price of a piece of furniture. How can you tell whether a certain dining-room suite or a specific chest or desk is good value or not? Here are four means of judging its quality:

1. Find out the material of which it is made (read the tags).
2. Examine the way it is made, its construction features.
3. See that it has good proportion and design.
4. Be sure it is well finished.

Each of these four principles is equally important. To amplify them:

1. The materials used in making any piece of furniture help to determine its beauty, its quality, and its price. A desk with walnut veneer will cost more than a similar desk made of gumwood veneer stained to resemble walnut. The

A drawer of molded plywood with rounded dustless corners. *(Courtesy of Mengel Co.)*

Construction, proportion, design, and finish help to determine quality.

(Courtesy of Widdicomb Furniture Co.)

beauty of the walnut markings, the pattern, and the texture of the wood add to its worth.

2. A chest with well-constructed drawers on center guides, dovetailed front and back, with corner blocks and side blocks, with three-ply dust panels between the drawers, will be better in quality and will cost more to produce than a chest of similar appearance without such construction features.

3. A good reproduction or adaptation of a fine eighteenth-century sideboard or a simple, straight-lined Modern buffet will both have more beauty and quality than a more elaborate-looking chest which is overscaled, heavy, and ornate.

A reproduction is a true copy of an authentic antique piece. In an adaptation, the design has been simplified. An adapted piece follows the lines and the proportions of the original, but certain of the details have been eliminated to meet the limitations of the machine and to bring down the cost. The original was handmade. In the adapted piece, the size and scale are often cut down to fit the smaller wall spaces of today. Hence adaptations are frequently more appropriate than reproductions for present-day homes. The phrases you will see, such as, "inspired by Sheraton," "stemming from the eighteenth century," "adapted from the Chippendale style," "copied from Hepplewhite," "Modern interpretations of Traditional design," "copied from authentic original," are likely to refer to adaptations, not reproductions. Remember, always look for good design and proportion, no matter by what name the style is called. Simplicity is one sure component of good design.

4. The finish that brings out the natural grain of the wood and reveals its texture and pattern is one of beauty and quality. If a finish has been lacquered several times and hand rubbed besides, it will have added clarity and depth. It will also resist heat, alcohol, and water.

CONSTRUCTION OF UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

When you buy an upholstered chair, love seat, or sofa, you should look for more in the way of real value than the eye appeal of good design and an attractive fabric covering. There are hidden values under the upholstery which you should know. It is these "undercover" qualities that mean durability and give lasting satisfaction to the owner.

There are five important parts to every upholstered piece, besides the quality of its design. They are the frame, the spring supports, the springs, the filling, and the upholstery fabric.

1. The *frame* of a good upholstered chair is made of hardwood, such as ash, birch, gumwood, or maple. Such woods make strong and durable frames, provided the joints are double-doweled and the corners reinforced with hardwood dowels and glued corner blocks.

2. *Spring supports* (the base on which the springs are set) are usually made of interlaced webbing, securely fastened to the hardwood frame. This type of spring support is resilient and sturdy. It will stand years of use without sagging.

BAD DESIGN

3. *Springs* are generally of two kinds—the single cone, like an inverted pyramid, and the double cone, like an hourglass. Springs are firmly sewed to the interlaced webbing at the bottom of a chair. At the top, they are hand-tied with strong, heavy twine, either four ways or eight ways (like the spokes of a wheel), and fastened to the wood frame. It is always best to have the springs tied eight ways, because this guarantees their remaining upright, no matter where the pull comes from, and an upright spring virtually never wears out. It also provides for an even distribution of weight. There are springs in both the back and seat of a good lounge chair, love seat, or sofa. A layer of heavy burlap covers the springs and is firmly tacked to the wood frame, to prevent the filling from entering the springs.

GOOD DESIGN

There are many new types of springs on the market today. One of them is called the "no-sag spring." This is a flat spring, made of interlocking strips of metal. It is often used in medium-priced chairs, but is not to be compared for comfort or durability to the coil spring.

4. The *filling* may be of moss or hair or a mixture of moss and hair. It is spread over the burlap-covered springs. Layers of cotton padding then cover the filling to give the back and seat of the piece a smooth, comfortable surface. Hair stays resilient longer than any other filling. However, moss is less expensive and will give plenty of comfort for a good many years. Moss is a resilient vegetable fiber. In more expensive furniture, down and feathers are also used as filling, especially for loose cushions. Another type of filling which is now available is a rubber product sometimes called "foam rubber." It has many different trade names. It is durable, resilient, and conforms to the contours of the body. Foam rubber is used in higher priced furniture. On better pieces of upholstered furniture, a muslin cover is placed over the filling.

There are hidden values under an attractive cover on an upholstered chair.

(Courtesy of Dunbar Furniture Co.)

5. The *upholstery fabric* is tacked over the cotton-felt padding or muslin cover. Seams are hand-tailored with welts around the edges which give the piece form and stability. Some upholstered furniture has a spring edge, which is an added roll of filling attached to the edge of the seat at the point of greatest wear. It is hand-padded and hand-stitched.

Shopper's note: A competent salesman will know all the hidden values of a good upholstered piece. Ask him to give you the facts before you buy.

CARE OF FURNITURE

1. *Daily dusting*

A clean soft cloth which does not leave lint on the surface of the wood is the best tool for the daily dusting of wood furniture. Dusting enhances and improves a good finish.

2. *Cleaning*

If furniture is dusted daily, it will seldom need washing. If it gets sticky, however, a solution of any mild, neutral soap may be used. Wring out a cloth in the solution and go over small areas at a time. After the surface of the furniture is clean and dry, it is best to polish it.

3. *Polishing*

This requires two clean cloths. After washing a piece or when the finish looks dull and lusterless, it should be polished. First dust it with a clean, lintless cloth. Then apply a small amount of good furniture polish to the second cloth and rub in a circular motion until no polish is visible.

4. *Stains and spots*

Water sometimes leaves a gray or white spot on wood. This may be removed by applying water to which two or three drops of ammonia have been added. Then rub the place dry with a clean cloth.

5. *Alcohol stains*

Alcohol stains can be removed with turpentine or alcohol. Both usually penetrate a finished surface and restore the color to a stain without softening the finish. Scoop off the turpentine or alcohol after a few seconds with a piece of cardboard. Then rub the spot dry with a good furniture polish.

6. *Heat or burn stains*

These leave a white ring, which can be removed with a cloth dampened in oil of camphor. Rub the spot well and allow it to dry. Then polish and rub it with a good furniture polish.

7. *Cleaning of upholstered furniture*

Brushing with a stiff whisk broom will remove superficial dust. Cushions should be removed and corners carefully inspected. They should be thoroughly brushed and then reversed. A bimonthly cleaning with the special parts of a vacuum cleaner is a good plan. Be sure to run over all exposed surfaces slowly. If a covering is badly soiled, wash with a commercial soapless shampoo, following the directions given. (Soapless shampoos can be used on almost all fabrics except velvets and velours.) Keep the furniture out of use until it is thoroughly dry. It is usually wise to have a professional cleaner give your upholstered pieces an expert cleaning once a year.

FURNITURE TERMINOLOGY

Baluster—a small, molded, tapering spindle of wood, one of the vertical supports of a staircase or chair back.

Banister—same as "baluster."

Beading—a small, semi-circular molding, used as a finish next to a plain surface. Divided to resemble beads, it is a popular form of ornamentation.

Bergère—a style of upholstered chair fashionable in the eighteenth century in France—also a type of sofa. It has a wide, curved back and cabriole legs.

Bombé—a front which is rounded or bulged.

Breakfront—a front of a cabinet formed on broken lines or various levels. The center section is larger and projects farther than the side sections.

Bun Foot—a flattened globe-shaped foot, used on lounge chairs.

Cabriole Leg—a leg with a double curve. The outward curve at the top forms the knee and the inward curve below forms the ankle. Common in Queen Anne, Chippendale, Louis XV, and Victorian furniture.

Camel Back—the name applied to chairs and sofas, when the top rails of the backs are humped up in the center like a camel's back.

Chaise Longue—a French term meaning a long chair—a kind of day bed, or chair and stool combination. An elongated seat or couch, with support for the back at one end only.

Claw-and-Ball Foot—a termination for a curved leg, such as the cabriole. The leg, the claw, and the ball may be carved from a solid piece of mahogany. This motif was derived from the Chinese legend of the dragon clutching the world in his claw.

Collar—a narrow band, used near the top or bottom of a chair or table leg.

Comb-back—a type of chair back, used only for Windsor chairs. It is a high back with many spindles set like a comb into a broad top rail. Sometimes the chair has a small headrest above the top rail, which is similarly constructed.

Commode—from the French, designating a cabinet or low chest of drawers.

Console Table—a small table designed to stand against the wall.

Cornice—the top, or finishing, molding of a column or piece of furniture.

Credenza—a sideboard or chest without legs.

Dovetail—a joint for fastening two pieces of wood together, especially when the pieces are set at right angles to each other. The mitered edges are cut triangularly so that the two ends interlock and fit tightly together.

Dowel—a joint used in furniture construction, consisting of cylindrical wooden pins, or pegs, fitting into corresponding holes.

Drop-leaf Table—a table with hinged sides which fold down.

Drum Table—an occasional table with a round, drum-shaped top.

Fiddle-back—a chair back with a center splat shaped like a fiddle, found mainly in William and Mary, Queen Anne, or Colonial styles.

Finial—an ornamental terminal for the top or corner of a piece of furniture, common forms being urns and buds. It is used on top of back posts on chairs, posts on beds, and in the center of broken pediments on top of cabinets. Smaller finials are used on tops of lamps.

Fluting—a series of parallel, vertical channels, or grooves, cut into a flat surface, legs, pilasters, or columns. Fluting is the exact reverse of reeding.

Fretwork—ornamental, geometric openwork, or work in relief, often found on chairs and tables.

Functional—furniture design based on the purpose or use of the particular pieces rather than on pure ornamentation.

Gallery—a decorative, wood or metal railing, used as a rim on a table top or a sideboard.

Gate-leg—supports for drop-leaf tables, hinged like a gate to support table tops.

Highboy—a high chest of drawers set on legs. Highboys were first built in the early eighteenth century, their height ranging from 4 to 6 feet.

Hitchcock Chair—A provincial chair of the early nineteenth century. A painted piece with rush seat, turned legs, and back which curves out at the top with horizontal slats.

Inlay—a design of contrasting woods, ivory, ebony, satinwood, or other materials, set into a surface. It was a popular form of decoration in the eighteenth century.

Knee—the projecting upper curve of a cabriole leg.

Lacquer—a type of varnish, either colorless or with pigment added, used as a coating for polished surfaces.

Ladder-back—a chair back with a series of horizontal slats between the uprights.

Linen-fold—a type of wood carving, which resembles folds of linen.

Lowboy—a low English chest with several drawers on high legs.

Love Seat—a small sofa for two persons.

Lyre—a type of design used for chair backs and for table pedestals in the shape of a lyre.

Marquetry—an inlaid pattern, made up of small pieces of varicolored woods.

Molding—ornamental strips, either sunk into or projecting from the surface—used for decoration.

Mortise and Tenon—a joint used in furniture construction. The mortise is the hole, or socket, cut in a solid piece of wood, into which the corresponding projecting piece, the "tenon," is fitted to form a solid joint.

Ormolu—a metal composition, resembling gold, from which decorative castings are made for trimming furniture.

Ottoman—foot stool or large upholstered footrest.

Patina—in furniture, the surface appearance of wood as the result of long exposure.

Pediment—a triangular-shaped piece above the cornice, either in architecture or furniture. Frequently when it is used as a crest for a secretary, highboy, or other tall piece of furniture, the pediment is broken in the center with a finial or some other decorative form.

Pembroke Table—a small rectangular table with drop leaves and tapering legs.

Piecrust—an edge on a table, which is raised, scalloped, and fluted. It is usually found on a tip-top table of the Chippendale era.

Prince of Wales Feathers—a type of design consisting of three plumes or feathers, popularized by George IV when he was Prince of Wales. They are generally used in chair backs of Hepplewhite design.

Reeding—a series of vertical, semi-round surfaces, carved to simulate a bunch of reeds—the reverse of fluting.

Refectory—originally the dining hall in a convent or monastery. The name is now applied to a long, narrow table of a design similar to dining tables used in early times by the monks.

Relief—a carved design, raised from the background surface.

Ribbon-back—a type of chair back with a conventionalized ribbon motif in the carving of the back splat. One of the earliest forms of this style was developed by Chippendale.

Secretary—a desk topped by a bookcase.

Serpentine—a front for bureau, commode, or sideboard, which is shaped with a wavy or double curve.

Shield-back—a type of chair back, chiefly used by Hepplewhite, which is shaped like a shield.

Spade-back—a four-sided foot, tapering to the base, the sides of which are often shaped like a spade or shovel.

Spindle—a slender, turned, vertical baluster or rod.

Spinet Desk—a modern type of desk, made to resemble the quaint old keyboard instrument called a spinet.

Splat—a piece of wood in the center of a chair back. It may be very simple or elaborately ornamented, used either vertically or horizontally.

Splay, or Splayed—spread outward obliquely.

Stretchers—pieces of wood used as strengthening braces between legs of chairs and tables.

Swag—a decoration in wood or metal, resembling festoons or draperies.

Tenon—a projection cut at the end of one piece of wood that fits into a corresponding hole or mortise to form a solid joint.

Tester—a canopy over a bed, supported by the bedposts.

Tier-table—a small table with two or three tiers, or tops, usually round in shape.

Trestle Table—the earliest type of table, which consisted of great, oaken planks laid across trestles.

Tripod Table—a small table with center pedestal which terminates in three spreading legs. The top, usually round or oval, is so designed that it can be tilted up, to go against a wall.

Turning—the process of shaping or ornamenting wood by turning on a lathe. It is used for making chair and table legs and spindles.

Veneer—a thin sheet of wood, usually of choice grain, glued to a solid or plywood surface of plain wood.

Welting—a cording of material, which is inserted between upholstery seams and shows on the right side.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Fabrics and Window Treatments

FABRICS

Before you plan to buy fabrics to make your home beautiful and add to its comfort, you should be able to judge their value and quality. There are four important factors to consider in choosing materials. They are

1. Fiber
2. Weave
3. Durability
4. Design

With the following information tucked away in your mind, you can invade the drapery department of any store without fear of bewilderment or of making a poor purchase.

FIBERS

Fibers used in weaving materials for the home fall into three classes: vegetable, animal, and synthetic. In the first class, the most important fiber is cotton. Its chief characteristics are its high degree of absorption, its easy washability, and the fact that it is not greatly affected by atmospheric change. As well as being practical, cotton is also plentiful.

Flax, the source of linen, is grown chiefly in Belgium and Ireland. It is a durable fiber which gives long wear. It has what is commonly called a good "hand," meaning that it is pleasant to touch and use. It hangs well and is therefore suitable for draperies.

Ramie, the other vegetable fiber, is something like linen in quality. It is strong and has a luster.

The chief fibers in the animal classification are silk and wool. Silk is a very fine fiber with great luster and resiliency. Its rate of absorption is higher than that of cotton or rayon, but it can still feel comparatively dry. It rarely reacts to mildew but is affected by heat, which may discolor it. It is most serviceable because it does not attract dirt. When soiled, it may be washed or dry-cleaned. Because it is so pliable, it can be made to hang or drape with great beauty.

Wool usually comes from sheep. Fibers from some varieties of sheep are longer than those from others; some are lighter and some are more fragile. Wool grown in a cold climate has greater strength than wool grown in a hot climate. A fiber used often in the manufacture of textiles is mohair or goat's hair. It is long and wiry in texture and is suitable for upholstery.

The best wool fabrics have tensile strength, great elasticity, and drape well. Elasticity is a quality not to be overlooked when one is hunting for durability. The order of durability for fibers is: silk, ramie, mohair, wool, linen, mercerized cotton, cotton, rayon. All fibers are combed, then placed parallel to each other and spun into yarn. The more tightly a yarn is twisted, the greater its strength will be. Many yarns are made of two different types of fibers twisted together, such as silk and wool or rayon and wool. When a yarn is composed of different types of fibers, its strength is not so great as when it is made from one type alone. This is because the different fibers rub against one another, causing wear.

Synthetics

Rayon is a man-made fiber, with a short history. In chemical composition it is chiefly cellulose, which classifies it as a vegetable fiber. There are four methods of making rayon:

1. The nitrocellulose method
2. The cuprammonium method
3. The viscose method
4. The cellulose-acetate method

The difference between these methods lies in the acid bath that is given to the cellulose, which itself comes from wood pulp or cotton linters. The cellulose is treated chemically, so that it becomes a viscous solution. Then it is forced through tiny holes in jets, called spinnerettes. It comes from the jets as a fiber and is hardened either by evaporation or coagulation caused by further chemical baths.

The acetate group of synthetics is developing rapidly. Cellulose-acetate rayon has a higher tensile strength when wet than other rayons. Before World War II, almost one-fifth of all rayon was produced by the cellulose-acetate method. Coal, tar, cellulose, vegetable matter, milk, casein, and glass are today used successfully in the manufacture of a variety of new fibers.

Plastics have also entered our picture and will continue to broaden the scope of decorative fabrics. Actually, they are not "fabrics" at all, but thin or thick sheets of film squeezed from a machine. They may be almost transparent and thin enough to be used in the daintiest bedroom, or they may be quite heavy and sufficiently practical for use as upholstery. The latter type seems like a heavy leatherette. The main reason plastics are so welcome is that they are practically impervious to dirt, stains, and fire. They can be cleaned as easily as enamel or any other smooth surface. They are being produced in many new patterns and colors and are appropriate for any room in the house.

Weave

The art of weaving was known as early as 5,000 to 6,000 years before Christ. Egypt, with its marvelously preserved tombs filled with objects of ancient life, gives us an authentic pictorial record of the weavers of 2500 B.C. Their looms were simple but basically not unlike the hand looms of today. The principle remains the same; warp threads are stretched vertically on the loom and weft (woof or filler) threads are passed across it.

Early in the nineteenth century, Jacquard invented a power loom on which the most intricate and elaborately colored designs could be woven. Ever since this invention, novelty weaves of all kinds have been popular. Essentially, however, these are all variations of the three basic weaves: the plain weave, the twill weave, and the satin weave.

The plain weave, which is the simplest, is like a child's kindergarten weave. In it, the filling yarn, or weft, is passed first over one warp thread, then under the next, and alternates in this fashion across the cloth. Some of the most durable fabrics are made in this weave—such as chintz and cretonne.

In the twill weave, which is noted for its diagonal effect, a warp thread goes over two and under one weft thread. Then the next warp thread skips a different number of weft threads, producing a slanting, or "herringbone," pattern. Gabardine and ticking are twill materials.

The satin weave is a variant of the twill weave. Here the warp skips from four to seven weft threads. The latter are frequently so much finer than the warp that the long "floats" of the warp thread give the cloth a glossy, shiny surface. Common fabrics in the satin weave are satin and faille.

Textiles for Eighteenth-century Furnishings

Before you buy fabrics for slip covers, upholstery, or draperies, you should consider the house in which they are to be used. Eighteenth-century room furnishings, for instance, are rather formal. If you have an eighteenth-century home you should select materials that are appropriate in design and texture.

Fabrics that are harmonious with eighteenth-century furniture are

- Brocades
- Cretonnes
- Chintz
- Corduroy
- Hand-blocked linen
- Tapestry
- Damask
- Crewel embroidery
- Petit point
- Rep
- Satin (plain and antique)
- Velveteen
- Leather

It is not necessary to use more than three of these materials in any one room. In choosing fabrics, a safe formula is always "a pattern, a plain, and a stripe." This is commonly called the Rule of Three.

Eighteenth-century English interiors were famous for their gay-flowered chintzes, fine hand-blocked linens, and crewel embroideries. These were imported at first from India, at the beginning of the century, by rival trading companies. Competition became so keen that the home-weaving industry was endangered. When imports were curtailed, the English mills began to turn out lovely brocades, damasks, and chintzes. Textile design was influenced by the classical motifs of the four Adam brothers. Chinese patterns, after those favored by Chippendale, also appeared; so did Anglicized versions of India prints, such as the famous tree of life.

Fabrics with narrow stripes, running from ½ inch to 1¾ inches in width, are suitable besides any of the above materials. Plain fabrics may be either smooth or textured and should repeat the colors of the patterns or stripes.

For an eighteenth-century living room of moderate size, we suggest the following scheme. Against walls and woodwork of honey color hang draperies of an English-type chintz. The material has a soft green ground patterned in clusters of roses, shading from cream to deep shrimp pink, with dark green leaves. They are intertwined with honey-beige ribbons.

(Courtesy of J. H. Thorp and Co.)

Large cabbage-rose effect in hand-printed chintz.

(Courtesy of F. Schumacher and Co.)

Rayon and cotton print with swag rose design.

FABRICS FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ROOMS

(Courtesy of J. H. Thorp and Co.)

Rayon and cotton matelasse in geometric pattern.

(Courtesy of J. H. Thorp and Co.)

Rayon and cotton woven in tapestry effect.

On the sofa against the long wall have a slip cover of the same material. Cover the two armchairs in front of the fireplace opposite in dark-green-and-shrimp-striped brocade. Upholster a large wing chair in dark-green antique satin. These materials are ample for this room. The chintz pattern is fairly large and dramatic. The striped brocade (in colors taken from the chintz) and the antique satin are both formal in texture and quality.

Textiles for Provincial Interiors

For informal rooms keep in mind the "homespun spirit." Do not consider anything that suggests elegance, such as brocade, damask, or satin. The most appropriate materials for a simple Provincial interior are

Textured cotton	Gingham	Chintz (small patterns)
Plain cotton	Percale	Cretonne
Homespun	Dotted Swiss	Ticking
Monk's cloth	Organdy	Denim
Plain or plaid friezé	Calico	*Toile de Jouy*

In a small Early American living room, let us visualize a pair of windows on either side of a fireplace wall paneled in natural pine. The three other walls are papered in a pattern of small red flowers with dark blue leaves on a beige background. At the windows we will hang curtains of blue-and-white-striped ticking, which will be apron length. A settle, or sofa, stands on one side of the fireplace, opposite a Boston rocker and a side table. The settle has a long cushion, which ties to the spindles in the back and is covered in the blue-and-white stripe. Ticking also covers the loose cushion on the seat of the Boston rocker. Two open armchairs have backs and seats upholstered in a plain, heavy-textured red cotton. The rug is a tweedy oatmeal mixture in cotton.

Now let us "furnish" a French Provincial bedroom, which has two windows, twin beds, a boudoir chair, a large chest, a slipper chair, and a dressing table. The walls and woodwork are a dark blue-green. The windows are curtained in *toile de Jouy* in a lovely rustic pattern of raspberry color on a cream ground. The bedspreads are the same *toile* with plain tops and ruffled skirts. The boudoir chair is upholstered in quilted lemon-yellow chintz, welted in raspberry. The slipper chair has a slip cover of *toile* to match the curtains. The little dressing-table skirt and accompanying hassocks are in the quilted lemon-yellow

(Courtesy of Brunschwig and Fils.)

All-over patterned chintz in a rural motif.

(Courtesy of Brunschwig and Fils.)

All-over bird and flower chintz.

(Courtesy of F. Schumacher and Co.)

Wood-block print on aralac—Folly Cove Series.

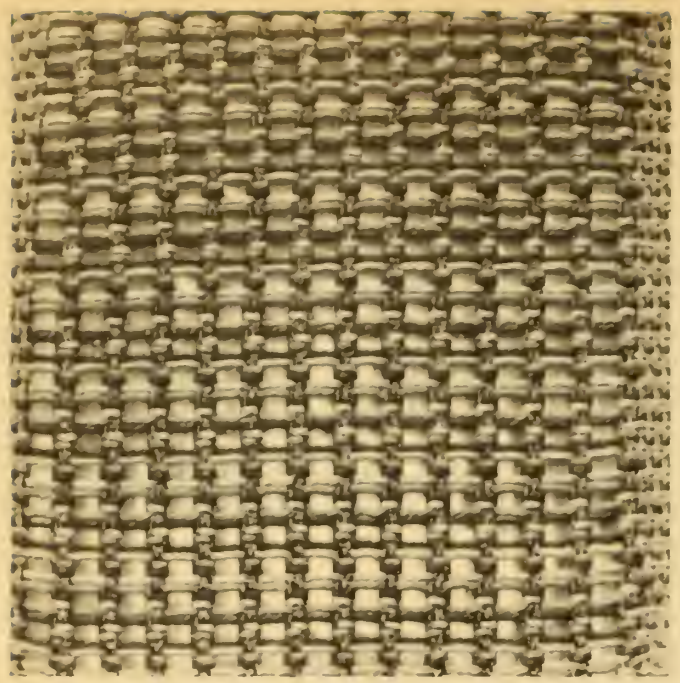
(Courtesy of F. Schumacher and Co.)

Wood-block print on aralac—Folly Cove Series.

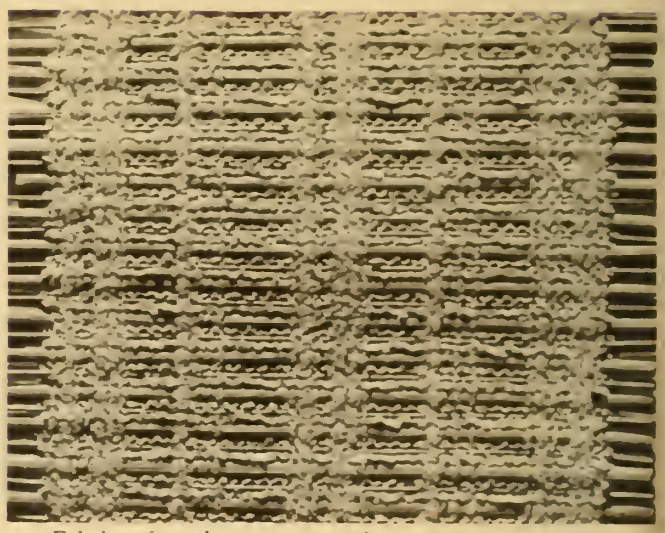
chintz, piped and bound with the raspberry. The rug is shaggy, cream-colored cotton.

Textiles for Modern Interiors

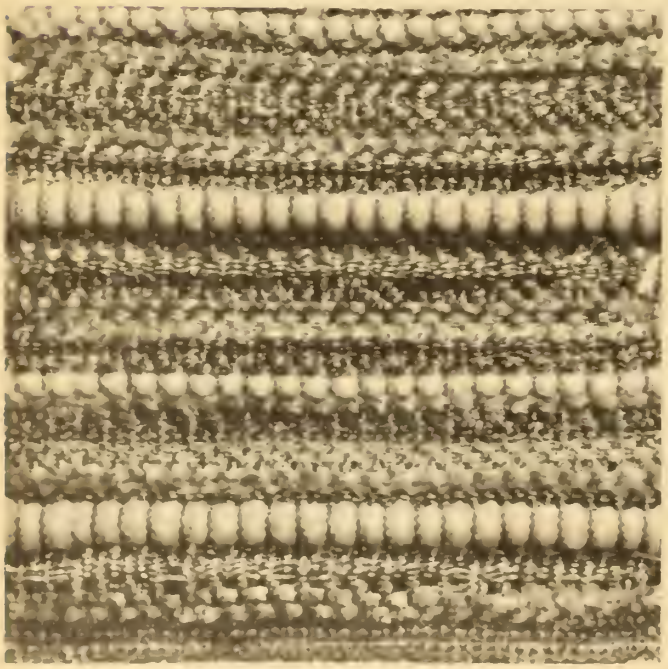
You may have noticed that the important thing in eighteenth-century and Provincial fabrics has been the pattern, or design. In Modern fabrics, texture is the most significant factor. The texture of innumerable varieties of surfaces—



Plastic, cotton, and metal hand-woven fabric by Dorothy Liebes.



Fabric of reeds, cotton, and raw silk woven by Dorothy Liebes.



Mixture of silk, cotton, wool, and metallics woven by Dorothy Liebes.

(Courtesy of Greeff Fabrics, Inc.)

Modern print in abstract design by John Little.

(Courtesy of Greeff Fabrics, Inc.)

Colorful print for a masculine room.

(Courtesy of F. Schumacher and Co.)

Printed cotton twill in Modern leaf pattern designed by John Little.

(Courtesy of Greeff Fabrics, Inc.)

Spiral plaid on glazed chintz.

(*Courtesy of Ben Rose, Hand Printed Textiles.*)
Hand-printed abstract leaf on cotton.

(*Courtesy of Ben Rose, Hand Printed Textiles.*)
Geometric hand-printed cotton.

(*Courtesy of Ben Rose, Hand Printed Textiles.*)
Free-drawn horse motif hand printed on cotton

(*Courtesy of Ben Rose, Hand Printed Textiles.*)
Abstract form on novelty cotton weave

woods, plastics, plaster, metals, and, most of all, textiles—lend interest to a Modern room. The Modern weavers, of whom Dorothy Liebes is one of the greatest, utilize many kinds of "yarns" to achieve new and unusual textural effects. Everything from raw silk to leather is employed to create beautiful weaves. Some of the materials they have devised give almost the impression of pieces of sculpture. Modern designers are never hidebound by tradition. They have created plaids, stripes, and intricately woven plain-colored fabrics. In prints they have shown great freedom in the execution and choice of their motifs. Among these are overscaled and stylized floral patterns and tropical leaves, bamboos, figurines, Indian symbols, horses, landscapes, feathers, and a variety of other subjects imaginatively drawn. The designers have made color combinations that are subtle, pale, romantically pastel, or brazenly brilliant. Today in a single fabric one may find "shocking" pink, lemon yellow, dove gray, and parrot green.

Let us furnish a living-dining room. The colors are emerald green, lemon yellow, and chocolate brown. There is a long row of windows, and for the draperies we will use a free-drawn Modern chintz of long pointed, emerald-green leaves joined together by stems of chocolate brown on a lemon-yellow background. Two lounge chairs are covered in the same material. A sofa is upholstered in a loopy cotton fabric in chocolate brown. Two small side chairs are upholstered in nubby lemon yellow. This is the whole scheme, to be used against gray-beige walls. The dining L of the room has the same print at the corner windows, but the chair seats are upholstered in emerald-green leatherette. The carpet for the entire area is a tweedy flax mixture in gray, beige, and off-white.

How to Know Your Fabrics

There are two kinds of fabrics in common use today: the flat and the pile. Flat fabrics are two-dimensional; pile fabrics are three-dimensional, due to an extra set of yarns that stands erect.

Brocade

1. Patterned, nonreversible fabric, woven on Jacquard loom
2. Background in plain or satin weave
3. Pattern in relief, like embroidery
4. Lightweight upholstery material

Brocatelle

1. Usually woven in one color, like damask
2. Pattern suggestive of quilting or embroidery; highly raised effect
3. Pattern in satin weave, against background in twill weave
4. Heavy upholstery material

Chintz

1. Fine, closely woven cotton fabric in plain weave
2. Usually printed in clear-cut floral design, with glazed finish
3. Pattern dictates style
4. Used for draperies, upholstery, and slip covers

Corduroy

1. Cut pile fabric of velvet type, usually made of cotton
2. Rib produced by floating extra set of filling yarns over surface, which is cut to make rows of tufts
3. Upholstery, slip-cover, and drapery material

Cretonne

1. Plain-weave, cotton fabric, similar to chintz, but coarser in construction and unglazed
2. Upholstery, slip-cover, and drapery material

Damask

1. Woven on Jacquard loom, with reversible pattern
2. Usually in one color; made of cotton, mohair, wool, rayon, or combination of these
3. Pattern in plain weave on satin ground; equally attractive for use on either side
4. Upholstery or drapery material

Friezé

1. Pile weave, made of twisted yarns
2. Pile in loops or cut to form pattern
3. Made of cotton, rayon, or mohair, or combination of these
4. Heavy, durable upholstery material

HOMESPUN

1. Coarsely woven, in plain weave
2. Simulating hand-woven homespun; like tweed
3. Upholstery and drapery material; in wool, cotton, or synthetics

MATELASSÉ (French word, meaning "mattress-padded")

1. Heavy fabric, something like brocatelle
2. Padded, or quilted, effect, because two thicknesses of material woven together; pattern formed by stitching
3. Upholstery material, usually made of rayon and cotton

TAPESTRY

1. Ribbed surface, like rep, with multicolored designs
2. Patterns woven structurally into material
3. Two sets of warp and two sets of weft yarns
4. Durable upholstery fabric

VELOUR

1. Trade name for cotton velvet
2. Pile fabric, used for upholstery

VELVET

1. Pile fabric, with dense, low pile
2. Made of wool, rayon, mohair, silk, or combination of these
3. Upholstery fabric

WINDOW TREATMENTS AND SLIP COVERS

Every homemaker feels that, when her curtains are up, she has cleared her biggest decorative hurdle. She feels this way because a room with curtains looks complete. Before achieving her final effect, however, she should remember the architectural reason for having windows. They are for the purpose of admitting light and air. This function should never be abused. Recalling that simplicity is the keynote of the decorative era in which we live, let us keep our window treatments simple. Any excessive window decoration will not only be in bad taste but will also obstruct architectural design and function.

There are two basic divisions of window treatment. These are: glass curtains and draperies. In most rooms, they may be used either together or separately. The materials and style in which they are made will be determined by the purpose and style of the room.

Glass Curtains

Glass curtains can be both useful and decorative. They are sometimes found in place of window shades, to insure privacy. They can help to disguise an ugly view or to regulate the amount of light entering a room. Usually they are made of thin, lightweight material and are hung close to the pane. Glass curtains may be used with or without draperies. Used alone, they are especially suitable for small rooms, where draperies would give a closed-in feeling. If more light and color are needed, they can be achieved in slip covers, pictures, and lamps.

If a room has a group of windows of assorted sizes and shapes—one is especially apt to find this in an old house—glass curtains are neutral enough to detract from these differences, whereas draperies in contrasting colors serve only to emphasize them.

Bedroom windows are often trimmed with glass curtains in any one of the many crisp and sheer or thin and clinging fabrics that one associates with an intimate atmosphere and personal apparel. Here are the names of a few:

Celanese	Marquisette
Ninon	Batiste
Silk gauze	Dimity
Net	Dotted Swiss
Voile	Organdy

For glass curtains in bedrooms, multiple widths of material with ruffles look best. There are many attractive variations of this style, but it is well not to have them too fussy. One can let them hang straight or use tiebacks, depending on the mood of the room. (It is safe to say that no ruffles are needed in any Modern setting.) It is customary to associate tieback ruffled curtains with a Provincial background. However, widely ruffled or flowered curtains of point d'esprit, organdy, or batiste are beautifully suited to an eighteenth-century or Victorian room.

Plain panels can hang almost anywhere. When they are used under draperies in a formal room, they should reach to the floor. Such curtains seem very simple and easy to arrange. It is the way you hang and tie them back that counts. In an informal room, they should always hang to the bottom of the apron, unless there is a radiator under the window. Then they may be sill length.

The color of the glass curtains in a bedroom or living room should in most instances blend with that of the walls—pale pink curtains with pink walls or beige curtains with light tan walls. If blue or green is the wall color, you will be much wiser to select glass curtains of white or écru, because blue and green are cold and apt to be unbecoming to pale tones when the light filters through them.

Glass curtains of every conceivable material, style, and decorative type can be bought ready-made. In today's stores they are often sectionalized according to their use. For instance, "cottage curtains," suitable for kitchens and informal rooms, "priscillas," white dotted ruffled curtains, and bathroom curtains are usually near one another or together. Sheer panels are grouped by themselves or beside the drapery fabrics.

Glass curtains with embroidered ruffles, outside and inside, are hung in straight panels in a small Traditional dining room. *(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)*

Ruffled organdy tieback curtains. *(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)*

Ruffled organdy tiebacks suitable for a little girl's bedroom. *(Courtesy of Parents' Magazine)*

Eyelet-embroidered organdy used for a dressing table and window ensemble.
(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)

When measuring and making curtains, there are certain rules you should follow, which will greatly simplify your job. Here they are:

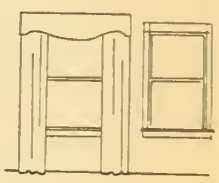
1. Always use two widths of 36-inch material for the average window.
2. If the window is wider than average, use more material.
3. When you measure a window, add 15 inches to its length for the curtains. This allows for hems and heading (top part of curtains where the rod goes). It gives you enough for a 3½-inch double hem at the bottom and a 4-inch double hem at the top. Headings are always necessary, especially when glass curtains have no overdraperies.

Draperies

Today beautiful ready-made draperies are available in all stores. They can be obtained in plain, self-patterned damasks, dramatic prints, stripes, small all-over designs, and in a variety of textured goods. These can solve your drapery problems easily. Moreover, many ready-made draperies are part of coordinated color ensembles, from which other properly matched and colored materials can be purchased for slip covers. However, if you have something very special in mind, you will have to buy your fabrics by the yard.

When purchasing drapery fabrics, be sure to consider carefully the scale and proportion of your windows in relation to your room. The materials you select will, of course, be part of a color scheme and will be suited to the style or period of furnishings you intend to have. Draperies, along with the color of the walls, form the background of a room. They may be soothing and unobtrusive or dynamic and brilliant. In either case, they deserve skillful handling. Depending on the way in which they are made and used, draperies can

1. Help increase the size of the windows
2. Help decrease the size of the windows
3. Help disguise architectural faults



Example 1: To increase the size of the windows

With pale gray walls, use a textured, woven curtain material in the same color. If the ceiling is low and the windows are small, hang your draperies so that they extend outside of the window frames. They should cover the frames

Draperies placed outside window frame with cornice placed above frame help to increase the size of the windows. *(Courtesy of The American Home)*

Draperies skillfully hide architectural faults of a remodeled house.
(Courtesy of Mademoiselle's Living)

and hang to the floor. Above the windows, hang a deep flounce or valance or a plain cornice covered in the material. These must cover the frame and extend 8 to 12 inches above it.

Example 2: To decrease the size of the windows

Bright floral draperies, with neutral glass curtains matching the walls, give a snug air of coziness which draws a room together. Pull them partly over the window, and they will decrease the size of the room.

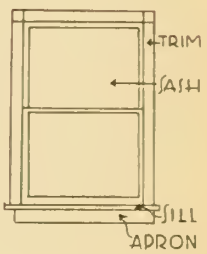
Example 3: To disguise architectural faults

If you have a room with windows of assorted sizes, do not treat them individually. This will only result in a spotty effect. Try using draperies of a uniform length which is becoming to all of them and see how you can minimize their oddities. Hang all your draperies to the floor or all apron length, and top them with valances at the same height around the room.

In most instances, draperies keynote the color scheme of a room. When you make your decorative plan, you know whether the walls will be plain or papered in a figure. You know what your rug pattern and color will be, and what materials you will use for slip covers or upholstery. When you select your drapery material, remember it will not look as it does in the flat sample bolt. It will be gathered in folds. Before you buy, gather it together and see if the effect is pleasing or whether all the beauty of the design disappears. Large patterns, floral or otherwise, usually look far better than small designs for floor-length hangings.

Most draperies in eighteenth-century or Modern rooms are hung to the floor. For Provincial rooms, children's rooms, or playrooms, apron-length curtains are better. Whether long draperies should have tiebacks or not is quite optional. It depends on the amount of light and air to be admitted and on the pattern of the fabric.

There are a great many different kinds of headings for draperies, but the simplest and the most popular is the pinch-pleat, or French, heading. This consists of a series of three tucks set 4 or 6 inches apart. It makes even groups of uniform gathers, or folds, which give a most pleasing effect. Box pleats form another simple type of heading for floor-length draperies. It is similar to the French heading with a box pleat in place of the cluster of tucks at the top.

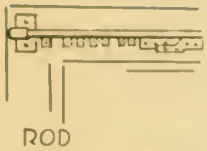


For hanging both draperies and glass curtains, the usual round brass rod, about ⅜ inch or ½ inch in diameter, is best. It may be obtained at any good hardware store or in the drapery section of a department store.

Modern bed-sitting room with draperies hung to the floor at corner window. *(Courtesy of Waverly Fabrics.)*

Floor-length draperies in a bay window of a Traditional living room.

In a Provincial bedroom apron-length draperies are tied back. *(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co.)*



ROD MEASUREMENTS

To measure for rod length, determine the distance across your window from one outside edge of the frame to the other. It is customary for draperies to cover the wood frame at the sides of the window. Fix the rod securely, as close to the top of the trim as possible. When you are planning draperies for a pair of windows, treat them as one, using a single rod across the top. If the rod sags in the center, a tiny brass bracket will hold it up and not be noticed. When you buy a rod, be sure it is long enough. At the same time, buy the end fixtures and drapery hooks that you will use on the back of the pinch pleats. These hooks hold the draperies to the rod. Ordinarily, they are sewn to the backs of the pleats, but if they are pin-pointed they may be pinned on.

PINCH PLEATS OR FRENCH HEADING

Do all your measuring with a metal tape or carpenter's rule. A cloth tape measure is apt to stretch and therefore be inaccurate. When you measure for the length of each drapery, unless you have chosen a plain material, add to it the length of the design or repeat. This is necessary, because draperies are hung in pairs, and you want the repeats opposite each other. Buy buckram to stiffen and line the pinch-pleat heading. It is 3 inches wide and may be purchased by the yard. It is best to have all draperies lined. This gives them protection from sun fading, makes them wear better and hang more gracefully. Buy the same amount of yardage for the lining as you need for the draperies. Beige sateen is the usual lining material. It looks well, the light shines through it pleasantly, and it is also inexpensive. If you want to line your draperies with a fabric in a solid bright color, choose one to match the drapery pattern and then make sure it is sunfast.

BOX PLEATING

If your curtains are made of linen, use an interlining of dark cotton flannel between the linen and the lining. This is necessary, because when sunshine comes through linen threads, the pattern on them is lost.

SKIMPY AND FULL CURTAINS

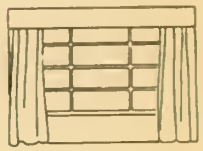
Pinch pleats, or fullness of any kind, consumes a great deal of material. Be sure to use at least one width of the fabric for each curtain, and two widths if you want to draw the curtains across the windows. Never hang skimpy curtains. They make the room look shoddy and unfinished. Even if your material is 50 inches wide, do not split it. Full curtains or draperies give a room a "dressed" and completed appearance.

If you decide to have a valance, you will not need a pinch-pleat heading. Sew rings on the tops of your curtains or draperies at regular intervals, so they can slip easily on the rod, or simply run the rod through the hem. The valance will cover all of this. However, if you want draperies that draw across the

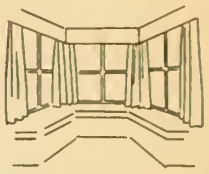
window, pinch-pleat headings are essential for an even, balanced effect when the draperies are closed.

If you have a Modern room or a formal Traditional interior, you may want a cornice. Cornices are usually made of painted wood or metal or plywood covered in the drapery material. Their decorative value lies in the fact that they repeat a color, texture, or architectural feature found somewhere else in the room.

Fabrics for Slip Covers



It is not necessary to have all your furniture upholstered. You can have slip covers made to fit right over the muslin covers of new pieces. This is possible on the strictest budget, whereas upholstering may not be. It is even a good idea to have two sets of slip covers for different seasons of the year.



Slip covers enhance a room like a new hat improves a woman. They also give a "lift" to shabby or poorly designed pieces by disguising them. As a part of a planned color scheme, they can add decorative unity to any home. In choosing your slip-cover material, be sure to look for closeness of weave and smoothness of texture. Such fabrics are apt to be the most dustproof, have the greatest durability, and be the most practical for cleaning. As for pattern, select something that will be suitable for the furniture you are to cover. For instance, do not choose a large floral pattern for a small armchair. Do not put stripes on chairs with curved arms or backs. If you intend to make your own covers, the best fabrics are those with self patterns or small, all-over designs.

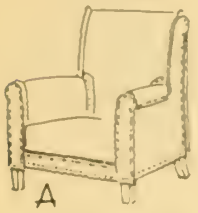
Most materials you will find today are sunfast and preshrunk. Ask about these before making your purchase. Ask about the bindings, also. If necessary, you can easily shrink a material yourself. If it is washable, wet it thoroughly, let it dry slightly (not in the sun), and iron it while damp. If it is not washable, steam and press it. It should be shrunk before being cut to fit your furniture.

Many slip covers are made of 36-inch material. For the amateur, 50-inch material is recommended, because it is less apt to need piecing. However, if the material you want is 36 inches wide, do not hesitate to buy it, because the salesperson will tell you just how much you should have. Before venturing forth, obtain (with a metal measure) the exact measurements of all the parts of the chair or sofa you want covered.

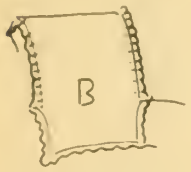
The choice of textiles commonly used for slip covers is a generous one. Chintz, corduroy, cretonne, denim, cotton twill, cotton gabardine, gingham,

linen, sateen, homespun, percale, quilted chintz, rep, sailcloth, ticking, and spun rayon are all popular.

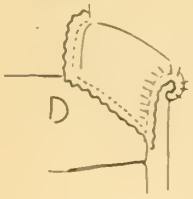
CUTTING & MAKING SLIP COVERS



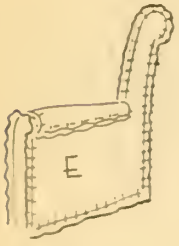
Here are instructions for cutting and making a slip cover. First, cut a cover out of newspaper and pin it to the chair for practice. When you start to cut the actual cover, do not cut it from the paper pattern, because materials stretch. Cut it from the cloth after pinning it. Be sure that the fabric design is centered accurately on all the large areas that are visible.



The most important steps in making a slip cover are the pinning and cutting. For a cover that has French seams, put the wrong side of the fabric against the chair. For one which is to have a "self welt" or corded seam (this fits better), lay the right side of the material on the chair. Pin it securely along the top of the back and cut the back first. Smooth it down over the inside of the back toward the seat, pinning it to the sides and top and allowing 4 or 5 inches to tuck on the inside of the chair and 2 inches for seams. Cut the inside of the back carefully. Next, cut the arms or sides (inside, outside, and fronts of arms), then the cushion and bottom of the chair. When the cutting is finished, pin the loose pieces together and fit them over the chair. Be sure to pin carefully and leave a good allowance of material to tuck in where the back, sides, and seat join and where the arms join the back. If the corners of the arms and back are rounded, there will be extra fullness here, which should be taken in by darts. Baste the pinned pieces together and give the cover another fitting. Make any further adjustments that seem necessary. You may baste in the welting or cording at the seams before removing the original bastings. Try the cover on the furniture once more. If it fits well, take it off and sew it by machine.



Leave the seam at the left side of the back open to within 4 inches of the bottom for fastenings. A zipper is excellent for this purpose, as are strong snaps sewn on tapes. If you use snaps, you will need a placket. Welting or moss fringe are equally good for the seams. These can be found at most trimming counters and may either match the predominating color of the cover or contrast with it, depending on your taste and the color scheme of your room.



The flounce at the bottom of the cover should be measured and hemmed with a 2½-inch hem. Then it can be gathered, box-pleated, or left plain, with "kick pleats" at the corners, according to the measurements and style of the chair. Today the plain skirt with "kick pleats" is favored.

After making one slip cover, you will have tasted success and will no doubt want to cover everything in the house. Besides chairs and sofas, you might

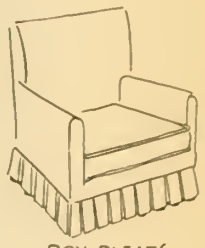
TAILORED SKIRT

consider beds. Bedspreads are not difficult and are good looking enough to satisfy the most ambitious homemaker.

The basic bedspread is the easiest of all covers to make. Measure the length of the mattress and add 36 inches, to allow for covering the pillows at the head of the bed. Then add another 24 inches for the drop from the end of the bed to the floor. This drop is usually only about 18 inches, but you will want a 3-inch hem all around.

RUFFLED SKIRT

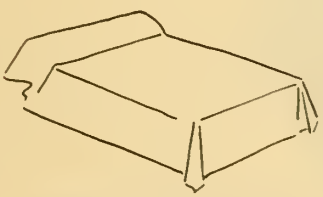
In figuring the width of the bed, estimate a single bed as 39 inches in width and a double bed as 54 inches. Most fabrics are either 36 inches or 50 inches wide. When using 50-inch material, you can avoid a center seam by using a length down the middle of the bed, then splitting another length and sewing it to either side. If the fabric has a great deal of pattern, the seams that result are practically invisible.



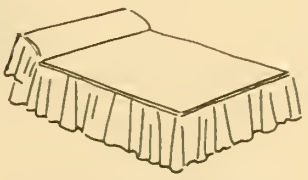
BOX PLEATS

A flounce gives a soft appearance to the otherwise severe shape of the spread. In order to have a fully ruffled or pleated flounce, cut double the amount of material needed for plain sides. Sew this to the edge of the spread so that it will hang straight down. Welt the seam or finish it with some type of braid. You may have box pleats, pinch pleats, ruffles, or kick pleats at the corners of a spread, just as you have in a slip cover. If possible, when your material is of medium weight, line the bedspread with sateen. This makes it wear better and lie flatter.

Again, you will find beautiful bedroom ensembles in many of our shops and stores. They come in a variety of materials and colors—ranging from pale, eyelet-embroidered organdy to brilliant tomato-red or emerald-green chenille. There are chintz, cretonne, and corduroy ensembles, as well as woven ones suitable for informal bedrooms and children's rooms. Such groups are fortunately "open stock." This means that, if you wish, you may purchase one or two pairs of matching draperies and a dressing-table skirt at the same time you buy the spread. The prices are not out of line and are much less than if you had an ensemble custom-made.



BASIC BEDSPREAD



RUFFLED BEDSPREAD

CHAPTER NINE

Color and Coordination

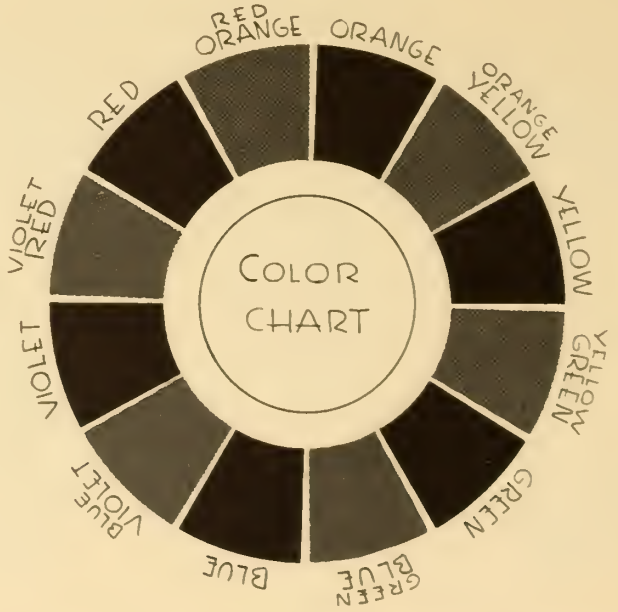
COLOR

There is no factor in decorating a home that is more important, more exciting, more fun to achieve than a good color scheme. When buying home furnishings, it is extremely useful to know how to use color and how to coordinate a color scheme. The eye appeal of color can contribute enormously to the success of any room plan.

The scientist has taken light apart, has analyzed it, and put it together again. He has placed his findings at the disposal of the manufacturer, retailer, and homemaker. This has been tremendously helpful, because it has given us the means of using color intelligently to gain the effects we want.

When a ray of sunlight is passed through a prism, it is broken up into a series of colors called the spectrum. Of these spectrum colors, three are called "primary": red, blue, and yellow. All the other colors are called "secondary," because they are formed by mixing two or more of the primary colors.

1. Red and yellow make orange
2. Yellow and blue make green
3. Blue and red make violet



Opposite colors are contrasting or complementary. Adjoining colors are harmonious or analogous.

(Courtesy of Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

Harmonious or analogous scheme built around two plain colors with terra-cotta bookshelves providing an accent color.

(Courtesy of Marshall Field and Co. and Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

Color scheme of room, inspired by chintz on sofa, combines cool dark green, warm beige, and carnation pink.

(Courtesy of Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

Color scheme for western exposure stems from drapery and sofa printed cotton, combining a floral with two plain colors in chair cover and rug.

(Courtesy of Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

A warm scheme for a north room, combining a brick red wall with a plaid drapery which repeats the wall color.

(Courtesy of Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

A contrasting or complementary scheme using bachelor-button blue with cherry red and chalk white.

Obviously, a great many gradations of each mixture are possible, because different amounts of the primaries may be used. Each variation is called a "hue." Addition of black to a hue darkens it to a "shade." Addition of white to a hue lightens it to a tint.

In former years, color was not the vital factor in decoration it is today. Some of you may recall the drab era of living rooms done in grayed shades of taupe and mulberry, rust and green, or of living-room suites upholstered all alike in wine, green, or blue. Everyone still knows of many rooms that are a hodgepodge of unrelated colors. Fortunately, most people today are aware of the importance of color harmony, although they may not be able to achieve it.

Usually, people go to one of two extremes; either they try to use too many colors or too few. It is best to balance the colors in a room, remembering that they must be related to each other either through color harmony or through color contrast. In color harmony the colors used must be next to each other in the spectrum, or they must contain some of the same colors. In color contrast, the colors should be as far from each other in the spectrum as possible and be exactly opposite in their components.

Examples: A dining room in yellow and green would have a color scheme based on color harmony, because yellow and green are adjacent to each other in the spectrum, or color wheel. The rug might be green twist-weave broadloom; the walls; pale yellow; the draperies, a yellow chintz with green leaves; while the dining-chair seats might be yellow-and-green-striped textured cotton.

A living room in a contrasting color scheme might use dark green, rosy red, beige, and white. Contrasting schemes are stimulating, exciting, gay. The wallpaper might be patterned in red roses with green leaves on a white ground, and the curtains white ruffled tiebacks. The woodwork might be white; the carpet beige; the furniture, covered in plain rosy red and in stripes of the red, green, and beige.

There are as many kinds of color schemes as there are bridge hands in a deck of cards. Rules are made only as guideposts for the new homemaker. They will help you to know something of the fundamental laws of color harmony. When you have mastered the rules, your use of color may depend on your personal color needs and preferences.

One of the first questions to ask yourself about any room is, "What exposure does it have?" We know that rooms facing north and east get less sunlight than rooms facing south and west. Therefore, a room with a north or east exposure

calls for warm colors, whereas a room facing south or west does not. Colors, like people, have personalities. The warmest colors of the spectrum are red and orange, the tones of fire and the sun. Less warm is yellow, which reflects sunlight; and the circle grows cooler as it approaches yellow-green. Green, the color of nature's landscape, is downright cool, while blue-green and blue are the coolest of all. Blue-purple is a touch warmer, purple is warmer still, and red-purple comes back into the warm range.

Most rooms fare best with a combination of warm and cool colors. This will depend not only on the exposure of the room but also on the temperament and tastes of the owner. The appropriate use of color also takes into consideration the size and purpose of the room. Light colors make a small room seem larger and dark colors make a large room seem smaller. This is why bedrooms, which are usually smaller than living rooms, are often finished in lighter colors. Also, light colors are considered more intimate than dark colors, and bedrooms are the most personal rooms in the house. In making an appropriate scheme for any room, large areas of color, like the walls and floors, should be considered first.

The lighting in a room is vitally important to the color scheme. A scheme that looks beautiful in a store under fluorescent lights can become dark and muddy in your home under an incandescent bulb. Always select colors under the same light that you have at home. If your room is dark and must be lighted when in use, plan your scheme for artificial light. If, on the other hand, the room gets a normal amount of sunlight, be governed by its exposure; that is, choose a cool color scheme for a room with a great deal of sun and a warm one for a room with little or none.

Some colors are more stimulating than others. Clear, bright colors, like reds and yellows, are found in dining rooms and game rooms, which are used for family gatherings, entertaining, conversation, and general sociability. Blues, greens, and wood tones are more restful and are often used in living rooms and bed-sitting rooms. In some rooms of this type, reds are used in small quantities as an accent color. A balance of stimulating and restful colors, of cool and warm colors, of light and dark colors, prevents monotony and insures interest. The proportions of each should be determined by the size, exposure, and use of the room.

Color can be repeated in small rooms adjoining one another. It unifies them, so that one seems to flow into the next. If you have a small house or apart-

Dark colors help to disguise architectural faults. *(Courtesy of Mademoiselle's Living.)*

ment, you can achieve a sense of greater space by using tints and shades of the same color in all the rooms. For example, if you put the same dark green covering on the floors of the living room, dining room, and the hall that connects them, you will increase the feeling of space throughout. You will also give yourself greater freedom in the choice of color accents, and by repeating the accents in connecting rooms, you will accomplish a most satisfying color scheme.

White has the same effect on a room as have all light colors. It makes the room seem larger. Also, white in off-shades helps to create a feeling of spaciousness. If you want a light color to enlarge your room, make the walls, ceiling, and woodwork all one tone and combine them with a floor covering that is a shade or two darker. Do not choose a bright color but rather a pale color. Then use dark accents. Conversely, if your color scheme is dark, have light accents. For example, try white woodwork in a room with dark green walls.

If a room has some unpleasant architectural feature which you would like to disguise—such as unevenly plastered walls, exposed pipes, or an overscaled mantel—do not have it done in a light color. In a case like this, dark walls with light rugs and draperies and bright color accents would change the mood of the room from gloom or ugliness to one of attractive cheerfulness.

One of the most sympathetic background colors for a room is gray. There are many shades: the warm beige-grays and mauve-grays and the cooler ice-grays, blue-grays, and slate-grays. The gray color family is a fine complement to most furniture tones, and gray carpeting is becoming to almost all floors. Gray is a color that can stand the tests both of sunshine and artificial light.

COLOR COORDINATION

What does color coordination mean? Quite simply, coordinated colors in rugs, fabrics, paints, and wallpapers go together harmoniously. They are the stores' answer to the need of ensembling home furnishings. The ready-to-wear clothing industry had been coordinating color for many years before the home furnishings retailers and manufacturers realized the benefits of the idea.

In a coordinated group of furnishings we find things that belong together and are harmonious in color, design, scale, and period with the minimum of effort. There are quite a few such coordinated groups on the market today. They are assembled in each of the three major style categories—formal Traditional, informal Provincial, and Modern. They are directed to the homemaker who feels that she does not want the services of a professional decorator but who, nevertheless, wants her home to be attractive and in good taste. These groups are really foolproof because for them designers and manufacturers have combined to produce furniture, rugs, fabrics, wallpaper, paints, and accessories, all of which are carefully correlated.

HOW TO CORRELATE BY COLOR

You may be a person with strong color preference who is replacing only part of a color scheme or you may be one of those who wants a completely new scheme and does not know where to start.

If you are the former, begin with your strong color preference and apply this color to the important areas in the room, such as the rug, the walls, the sofa, or the windows. If you are the latter, the simplest thing to do is to look at fabrics that contain interesting combinations of color until you find one you like. Then pull out the three most important colors in the fabric and use them as the basis for your scheme.

Example: If it is a living room you are furnishing, you might start with a large, beautiful cotton print in coral, slate gray, and green. Then your scheme might include

1. A plain material in slate
2. A plain or self-patterned material in coral
3. A stripe combining coral and green

This scheme uses repetition and contrast in color, with a good proportion of plain and patterned fabrics in the proper scale to give the room variety and interest.

HOW TO CORRELATE BY PERIOD

We all know that there are three major trends in furniture. Are we also aware that there are three equally outstanding trends in fabrics, because fabrics must either go on furniture as upholstery or with it as draperies? The three big furniture trends are

1. Eighteenth-century English
2. Early American or Provincial
3. Modern

Since eighteenth-century styles are the most formal, it is important to know what kinds of upholstery were used at that time and what kinds of formal materials are available today.

Upholstery and drapery fabrics used in the eighteenth century were

- Damask
- Brocatelle
- Brocade
- Tapestry
- Chintz (formal patterns)
- Printed linen
- Taffeta
- Rep
- Petit point
- Leather
- Velvet and velveteen

The colors used were rich and warm—crimson, royal dark blue, gold, and peacock green.

All of these fabrics can be purchased today. However, in today's colors we find more variety and subtlety. Furthermore, textured fabrics are often combined with printed cottons or glazed chintzes to make rooms gay and livable.

Early American styles are informal, and Early American fabrics and rugs were appropriately simple in design and homespun in texture. The fabrics used in New England were

- Cotton (dyed in primary colors)
- Needlework
- Crewel embroidery
- East India prints
- Homespun

All of these are appropriate today. Primary and secondary clear colors—red, blue, yellow, green, and orange—are good in small-patterned fabrics, such as conventionalized florals, calico patterns, checked ginghams, vine-patterned chintzes, informal scenic designs, and homespun plaids.

Rugs used were

- Hooked and braided rugs
- Rag rugs
- Woven cotton rugs

To these, we may add Modern shaggy rugs in lovely gay colors, flax or linen rugs in tweed mixtures, and copies of old, geometric-patterned hooked rugs.

In Modern rooms, texture and color are all-important. Almost any plain material, textured or smooth, can be used in Modern decoration. Texture is more important than design, although plaids, stripes, geometric patterns, overscaled and free-hand-drawn florals and leaves are all appropriate. Carpets in solid colors, both textured and plain, are good. Shaggy and deep-pile rugs or rugs with a sculptured effect in high and low pile are also popular.

It is well to recognize two kinds of Modern—the formal and more elegant Modern, and the simple, informal Modern that leans toward the Provincial. For Provincial Modern, Indian mats are in keeping, as are cotton-textured and shaggy rugs. The deep-pile and sculptured rugs in solid pastels are appropriate only with formal Modern.

HOW TO CORRELATE BY PATTERN AND SCALE

By "pattern" we mean the way in which a design is laid out on a fabric —in a stripe, a large framed picture, a vine or small all-over motif, or a detached floral. By "scale" we mean the size of the design itself. No materials will combine well in a room unless they are properly related in pattern and scale. Here are a few simple rules:

1. Any stripe or plain fabric may be combined with any patterned fabric.

2. Patterns may be combined with each other only when they do not conflict; that is, there must be enough difference in their sizes and layouts so that they do not compete with each other.

Example: DO NOT use two large striking patterns in the same room.

DO NOT use two designs with the same type of layout, such as two stripes, two diagonals, or two large framed florals.

DO NOT use a large floral fabric with a patterned wallpaper or patterned rug. If your carpet or wallpaper has a pronounced design, your fabrics should be plain or striped.

Bad. Too many patterns.

Good. Combination of pattern, stipe, and plain.

Bad. Too many patterns.

Good. Combination of pattern, stripe, and plain.

DO USE (1) a floral, (2) a stripe, (3) one or two plain materials in colors matching those contained in the floral. This Rule of Three is the safest formula. You may also use a floral with two plain fabrics which match it in color, and omit the stripe.

HOW TO BUILD A COLOR SCHEME

1. You can begin with the fabric for a living room

   a. Find a floral fabric with red roses and green leaves on a white ground to start your scheme.

   b. Then combine it with a green-and-white-striped wallpaper, white ceiling and woodwork.

   c. Use the floral fabric for draperies and slip covers of fireside lounge chairs.

   d. For the sofa and window valances, use a plain red textured fabric which repeats the red in the floral.

   e. Choose a plain green carpet, matching the green of the floral.

   This combination follows the Rule of Three: you now have a floral, or patterned fabric, a stripe, and two plain fabrics of colors contained in the floral.

2. You can begin with the rug for a dining room

a. The rug is a plain beige broadloom.
b. Find a wallpaper with a blue background and a conventional design of fruit or flowers in beige, burgundy, and green.
c. For the chair seats, choose a narrow multistriped fabric in beige, burgundy, and green.
d. The draperies may be beige to match the rug.

Again we have used the Rule of Three: here are stripes, a floral, and a solid color which is the base of the scheme.

3. You can begin with the wallpaper for a bedroom

a. You may start with a gray wallpaper which has a framed floral pattern in blue and rose.
b. For the bedspread choose a fabric in the same rose as the floral in the paper.
c. Select a solid gray carpet.
d. A gray-rose-and-blue-striped fabric may be used on the boudoir chair, for the dust ruffle of the bed, and for the tiebacks of the white ruffled organdy curtains.

This scheme combines a floral, a stripe, and two plain fabrics in another version of the Rule of Three.

4. If you live in a dirty city

DO NOT try to use ruffled organdy curtains or silk lamp shades.

DO USE glazed chintz for draperies and tightly woven fabrics —such as denim, mohair, ticking, or other dustproof materials— for upholstery. Leather or one of the new coated materials would also be good.

a. You may begin with a floral carpet in coral, gray, and olive green.
b. Paint the walls a plain gray like the gray in the rug.
c. Use a coral-and-gray-plaid chintz for the draperies.
d. For the sofa, select a coral dustproof coated fabric.
e. Repeat the drapery chintz on the fireside lounge chair and on a pair of sofa pillows.

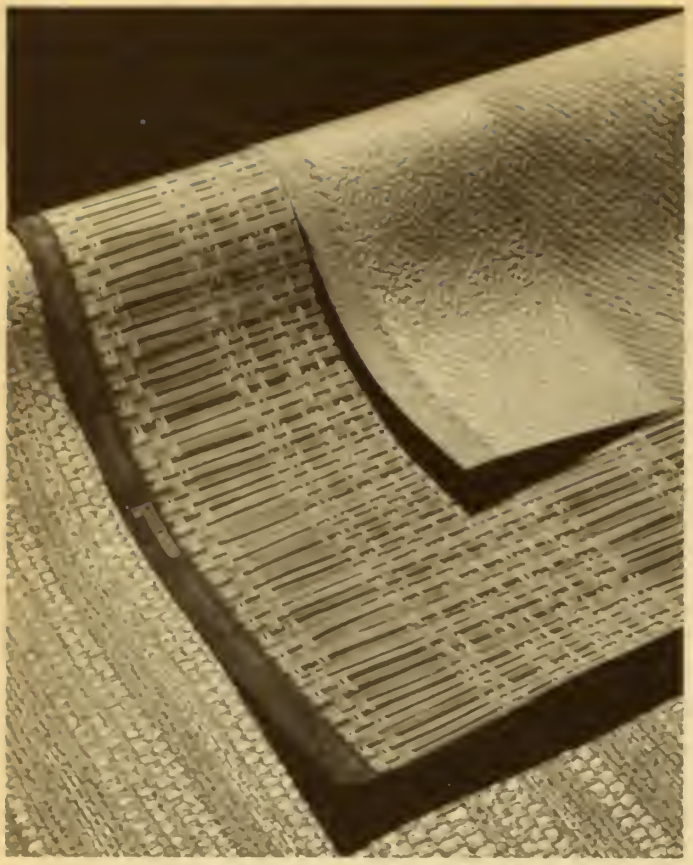
(Courtesy of Felicité Reynolds, decorator)

Traditional old-fashioned nosegay paper matching the glazed-chintz dust ruffles on beds

Provincial wallpaper with matching draperies. *(Courtesy of Better Homes and Gardens)*

Traditional medallion paper for an entrance hall. *(Courtesy of R.K.O. art director, Albert D'Agostino.)*

A Disney print on washable paper. *(Courtesy of United Wallpaper Co.)*



A group of photographed textiles on wallpaper designed by Dorothy Liebes. *(Courtesy of United Wallpaper Co.)*

Silk-screen printed contemporary wallpapers designed by William Justema. *(Courtesy of Katzenbach and Warren, Inc.)*

f. For a pair of occasional armchairs, find a solid-color fabric in olive green.

This scheme is colorful and practical. It combines a floral with a plaid and two plain materials. Again the Rule of Three has proved its value.

5. How to match curtains with wall color

Whether you should match your curtains with the walls will depend on the architectural details of your room. Before you start any color scheme, consider the following factors. If there is formal balance between the windows, the draperies or curtains can be in contrast to the wall color. Should the house have an informal plan, with windows placed at random, it is best to match curtains and walls. You may do both in solid plain colors or buy a companion paper and fabric. In either case, matched walls and draperies will give a feeling of unity to the room.

WALLPAPERS

The rules for using wallpapers are much the same as those for using fabrics. Colors and designs must be carefully related to the style, size, and purpose of the room. If the room is large, you may use a pattern in a large scale; if the room is small, the pattern should again be in proportion. When the architecture of a room is undesirable, a bold, dashing wallpaper will distract the eye from its structural faults.

In papering adjoining rooms, you should once more apply the Rule of Three. Do not use two floral papers or two stripes in connecting rooms. If one room is papered in stripes, the next should have a plain wall or one in a floral paper that harmonizes with the wall color of the first. If you are doubtful of your own ability to mix papers, look at the "companions" available in most stores today.

Living and Book Rooms

For Traditional living rooms and studies, use conventional flowered papers or stripes. In Provincial interiors, small all-over floral designs or papers simulating pine paneling are suitable. For Modern rooms, choose marbleized patterns, free-drawn or stylized designs, or some of the new "photographed" papers of hand-woven textiles.

Dining Rooms

The wallpaper in a dining room should be gay and lively, because you want a friendly atmosphere there to stimulate conversation. For Traditional rooms, scenic patterns, brilliant florals or fruits in all-over, framed, or striped designs are equally good choices. Provincial dining rooms may have a small medallion paper or a small fruit or floral pattern in bright colors. In Modern rooms, plaids, stripes, free-drawn florals, or wood-weave papers are appropriate.

Bedrooms

In bedrooms with Traditional schemes, framed florals or stripes may be used. For Provincial bedrooms, calico and percale patterns, polka dots, or nosegay papers in delicate pastels are suitable. Stripes or plaids, geometric-patterned or free-drawn florals are the best papers for Modern bedrooms. For nurseries, circus, Mother Goose, and Walt Disney characters all appeal to the young. In some children's rooms, papering only one wall and painting the other three is a good formula, because too much design in a sleeping room is considered overstimulating. Many of the new nursery papers are washable and stainproof. This is a point worth investigating.

Powder Rooms, Foyers, and Alcoves

For small rooms that require dramatic treatment, such as powder rooms, foyers, and alcoves, try an amusing, whimsical paper in Victorian or peasant design or a free-drawn Modern pattern. Such papers give sparkle and an individual flare to closetlike interiors.

With experience and a little imagination, you can make endless numbers of beautiful color schemes with fabrics and wallpapers. The more you attempt, the more adept you will become. It is like learning to play the piano. At first you will make many slips and mistakes. It is always best to begin with a simple scheme for a small room. After you have succeeded with this, you will have more confidence and can undertake a larger room with a more elaborate plan. The ability to make a lovely color scheme will give you the thrill and pleasure of creative effort, for it will be something you have worked out yourself and not bought ready-made. It will reflect your own taste and personality.

CHAPTER TEN

Floor Coverings

The largest areas of color in any room are the walls and the floor. We know that many decorative schemes stem from the fabrics or wallpaper in a room plan. Equally interesting, however, are those which grow out of the floor covering. At any rate, in every room plan, the floor covering, through its color, texture, and pattern, plays a major role and contributes a vital element to the success of the room ensemble.

Before buying a floor covering, which is always a big investment, it is well to know what types are available and which are appropriate for each kind of room. Every floor covering should be carefully related to the fabrics, colors, and furniture that form the decorative scheme.

There are two major types of floor coverings: hard and soft. The former includes linoleum, asphalt and rubber tile, cork, and composition floorings. The latter embraces wool and cotton rugs, orientals, flax rugs, and various kinds of fiber rugs. First we will consider soft floor coverings of the wool variety; then cotton, flax, and fiber rugs; and, last of all, the hard-surface materials.

THE ROMANCE OF THE RUG

Weaving is one of the oldest crafts in the world. To say when it first began is as impossible as to fix the date of the launching of the first crude boat or the fashioning of the first wheel. Certainly, hand weaving existed long before the earliest Egyptian civilization.

As century succeeded century, we find that certain nations developed rug design and weaving into a major art. In the Middle Ages, Marco Polo was amazed at the incredible beauty of the rugs he saw in the East and wrote of them in his *Travels*. Even earlier, the Crusaders had brought home many examples of the wondrous rugs of the Orient to spread upon the stone floors of their baronial halls. The Moors crossed the Mediterranean to enter Spain, bringing with them their skill as weavers. Thus before the time of Columbus, rug weaving had entered western Europe. Once there, it remained.

The first official record of the art of carpet weaving was made under Henry IV of France. In 1620, a mill was established in a soap factory at Chaillot, near Paris. It is from the French word "savon," meaning soap, that "Savonnerie," one of the famous carpet names in history, is derived. Savonnerie was originally a pile fabric of a rich, velvety nature.

Another important carpet name, "Aubusson," came from the French town of Aubusson. Under Louis XIV, a factory was established there to make carpets of the tapestry type, without pile. At the same time, in England, the carpet-weaving industry sprang up in the towns of Wilton and Axminster, where weavers were protected by the edict of King William. In 1801, a new kind of loom was invented by a Frenchman, Joseph Marie Jacquard, of Lyons. It was first employed in the making of silk fabrics but was promptly adopted by the carpet industry. This invention revolutionized the making of Wilton and Brussels carpets.

The first carpet mill in the United States was opened in Philadelphia in 1791. The coat of arms of our nation was a dominant figure in the pattern of the Axminster carpets made by this factory. It was Erastus Bigelow who invented the steam power loom in 1839 and later applied power to the Jacquard loom for the weaving of Brussels and Wilton carpets. Application of steam power to the Axminster loom was perfected in 1867 in the Alexander Smith mill at Yonkers, New York.

This is the romance of the rug. As a result of man's ingenuity expressed through machinery, beautiful floor coverings are produced today which are within the reach of everyone.

CARPET WEAVES IN WOOL FLOOR COVERINGS

The following data will help you to identify wool rugs and to know their qualities:

Axminster

1. Unlimited number of colors
2. Deep-cut pile
3. All-wool surface
4. Can be rolled only one way, because of stiff jute or wire construction in the weft backing

(*Courtesy of Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Co.*)

Floral Axminster.

(*Courtesy of A. and M. Karagheusian, Inc.*)

Floral Axminster.

(*Courtesy of A. and M. Karagheusian, Inc.*)

Fern pattern in Wilton weave.

(*Courtesy of Alexander Smith and Sons Carpet Co.*)

Floral-patterned Wilton.

(Courtesy of Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Co.)

Plain-colored velvet weave.

(Courtesy of Firth Carpet Co.)

Hand-carved chenille.

(Courtesy of Alexander Smith and Sons Carpet Co.)

Brussel's weave in Provincial pattern.

(Courtesy of James Lees and Son.)

Modern interpretation of Early American hooked rug.

5. Each tuft shows on the surface and forms part of the pattern
6. Long wearing, though not so durable as Wilton

Note: Most Axminster rugs are figured and multicolored, although a few are made in plain colors. An Axminster carpet is a good choice for a dining room or any room that gets hard usage, because spots do not show up noticeably on the pattern.

WILTON

1. Low, stubby-cut pile
2. Several layers of yarn imbedded in the back (This adds immeasurably to the wearing quality. For every tuft that shows on the surface, there is a long strand of buried yarn in the body of the rug.)
3. Generally limited to five or seven colors in a patterned rug
4. Can be rolled both ways

Note: Look at the back, and you can easily judge the closeness of the weave. A coarse Wilton will not wear as well as a fine Axminster. On the other hand, a better-grade Wilton with a fine, close weave will give longer service.

VELVET

1. A cut, low-pile fabric on which the design has been printed
2. Like Wilton in appearance but with more color possibilities
3. Solid-color velvet is woven from piece-dyed yarns

TAPESTRY

1. Similar in construction to velvet, with a looped pile

Note: Velvet and tapestry rugs do not have the structural quality of Wiltons because there is no buried wool in the back of the fabric. However, there are many grades of velvets. Look at the back and judge their quality by the closeness of the weave. In general, velvets are less expensive than the Wiltons or Axminsters. They serve well as bedroom rugs.

CHENILLE (from the French word meaning "caterpillar")

1. A seamless wool carpet with a deep pile woven in any shape, length, color, or design
2. An expensive, luxurious fabric recommended largely by decorators and architects

3. May be obtained in any width up to 30 feet
4. Has a more rugged texture and deeper pile than either Axminster or Wilton

Brussels

1. A Wilton weave with a looped pile
2. Made of worsted yarns, which means that the short fibers of the wool have been combed out and the remaining long fibers twisted tightly into small strands for added strength

Hooked Carpet

1. Made in the same manner as a Wilton but with a looped, or uncut, pile
2. Generally made of extra-heavy yarn and thus differentiated from the Brussels, which is made of worsted yarns
3. Ideal for use in Colonial and Early American Provincial interiors

CARE OF WOOL RUGS

1. When the carpet is new

If you think it is necessary to avoid using an electric cleaner on a new rug or carpet, you will be interested to know that this is not the case. You can use a vacuum cleaner from the first moment your rug is laid on the floor.

A new rug or carpet will "fluff" to a certain extent, because there are short fibers left in the pile when the yarn is cut. These gradually work loose, but the process does not injure the life or quality of a rug, and it will stop as soon as the loose fibers have been removed.

Occasionally, during the early life of a rug or carpet, tufts may protrude above the surface. Never try to pull these out, or you may injure the fabric. Instead, clip the tufts close to the pile with a sharp pair of scissors.

2. Daily and weekly care

Just one formula covers all rug care—cleanliness. Dirt is the worst enemy of floor coverings. Kept clean and free from dirt, grit, and dust, any rug or carpet will wear longer.

Frequent cleaning prevents the dirt from accumulating in the surfaces of pile fabrics. Unless they are removed, fine particles of grit become buried at the base of the pile. The sharp edges of this grit, grinding against the pile as the rug or carpet is walked on, tend to sever the fibers. A vacuum cleaner is recom-

mended for the weekly cleaning of both new and old rugs. Surface dirt may be removed daily with a carpet sweeper.

3. How to make a rug last longer

DO NOT

a. Sweep it with a broom. Sharp corn bristles are apt to cut or pull the yarn.
b. Beat or shake it. This tends to break down the backing and weaken the pile tufts.
c. Let spots stay in your rug. Salt solutions (like dog urine) discolor it; grease makes an ideal breeding place for moths.
d. Try to wash, wet, or clean a rug yourself. When your rug is dirty, send it to a professional cleaner.
e. Allow sharp, cutting edges, like shoes with golf spikes or ice skates, to touch it.
f. Rub a twist or friezé rug when it is wet. Patting will blot up water without danger of uncurling the yarn.

DO

a. Remove spots quickly before they have time to cause trouble and while you still know what caused them.
b. Use a rug cushion under your rug. It is worth many times its cost in preventing wear and makes your rug seem twice as luxurious.
c. Reverse the position of your rug occasionally so that the wear is distributed. Rearrange heavy pieces of furniture on it.
d. Have burns repaired by an expert. This prevents bad holes.
e. Fight moth damage by occasionally running the vacuum cleaner over the back of your rug and by moving heavy furniture each time you vacuum, so that you can clean under it thoroughly.
f. Keep your vacuum cleaner in top-notch condition. A poor cleaner only wastes your time and does an inadequate job.
g. Use scatter rugs over areas that get excessive wear.
h. Watch the humidity in your house. Rugs require a high moisture content. In very cold weather, when the steam heat is on, the dryness of the air will make rug fibers brittle; this is also true in dry hot weather. Humidifiers are healthy for your rugs (40 to 45 degrees is best).

COMMON CARPET QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Before you set out to buy wool floor coverings, it is wise to "know all the answers."

Q. *What is broadloom?*

A. Broadloom, contrary to popular belief, is not a type of weave or fabric. It is a generic term, applied to any carpet woven on a broad loom, without seams, and 54 inches or more in width. Thus you may have broadloom chenille, Wilton, Axminster, or velvet rugs. Widths available are usually multiples of 3 feet—such as, 6 feet, 9 feet, 15 feet, and 18 feet.

Q. *What is hardtwist carpet?*

A. Hardtwist carpet is woven with yarn that is tightly twisted under pressure before it is put on the loom.

Q. *What is a textured carpet?*

A. A textured carpet is one in which high and low piles of the same color are intermixed, making a nubby or uneven surface.

Q. *What is a sculptured rug?*

A. A sculptured or embossed rug is made by shearing the surface of a high-pile rug into a design. The pattern may either be cut by hand or by machine.

Q. *What is the purpose of undercarpeting?*

A. An undercarpet increases the durability and long life of a rug or carpet by absorbing the shocks of the many steps that give a floor covering its chief wear. It muffles footsteps and provides a certain amount of insulation against heat and cold. It adds to the resiliency of a rug and lends it a luxurious quality.

Q. *What size should a floor covering be?*

A. An all-over, wall-to-wall carpet is suitable for almost any room. It gives a room a feeling of spaciousness. If the floor is not in good condition, it solves the problem of hiding its defects. If you prefer to leave part of the floor showing, choose a rug of the size best suited to the proportions of the room, leaving an even, narrow border of floor on all sides. This strip may vary from 6 to 12 inches, depending on the scale of the room. In any case, beware of leaving too wide a border of floor around the rug. Avoid the "postage-stamp" look of a rug that is not room-size. It will break up the unity of your decorative plan.

Q. *Should rugs for adjoining rooms and hallways match?*

A. If matching carpets are used in rooms and halls that open into each other, an effect of greater space is created. Sameness of color or pattern may become monotonous, however, and detract from the interest of the rooms. If your rooms are not very small, therefore, try using floor coverings that are different and yet harmonious in color. If, for instance, your hall opens into your living room, have a patterned carpet in the former and carpets in a solid color taken from the pattern in the living and dining rooms. Halls and stairways are usually carpeted alike. In all cases, avoid clashing patterns and colors.

Q. *May scatter rugs be used over broadloom?*

A. Scatter rugs may be used very effectively on broadloom, but do not clutter up the room by using too many of them. Bear in mind the following rules for scatter rugs, which apply whether the rugs are laid directly on the floor or over a carpet:

1. Small rugs should be placed parallel to walls and furniture, not at angles.

2. They should be arranged to bear a direct relationship to the groups of furniture they complement—before a fireplace, a sofa, a dresser, or beside a bed.

3. Remember that, aside from adding decorative value to a room, they also serve to lessen wear on the most frequently used parts of the main carpet.

Q. *Which is preferable—a light or dark carpet?*

A. The shade of carpet you choose for a room is best determined by the amount of wear it will be given. Naturally, delicate pastel colors are not for areas where the traffic is constant and heavy, but it does not follow that the darkest carpets are the most practical. A solid black or dark blue carpet shows footprints and dust marks more readily than many pastels. Patterned carpets, which are growing in popularity because they add life and color to a room, are very practical because they do not show ordinary marks of wear. Textured rugs, even in light shades, have the same advantage.

Q. *What does a plain carpet do for a room?*

A. A plain carpet has the following effect upon a room:

1. It makes the room appear larger.

2. It provides contrast for figured walls, draperies, and upholstery.

3. It is a good background for small rugs.

Q. *What does a patterned carpet do for a room?*

A. A figured carpet has the following effect upon a room:

1. It makes the room seem smaller.

2. It lends it charm and distinction.

3. It forms an excellent background for a room in which there are large plain surfaces, such as plain walls, solid-color draperies, and solid-color upholstery.

4. Large patterned carpets belong only in large rooms. Small patterns suit smaller rooms.

Q. *What is the difference between a rug and a carpet?*

A. A carpet covers the floor from wall to wall. A rug leaves a border of floor around the room. Scatter rugs are rugs in small sizes.

Q. *In general, what are the things to look for in buying a carpet?*

A. Closeness of weave, thickness or depth of pile, springiness of wool, and clearness of color and pattern are the most apparent marks of quality by which you may judge a carpet.

WOOL FLOOR COVERINGS FOR THREE MAJOR FURNITURE STYLES

Eighteenth Century

The gay floral-patterned rugs of the Georgian period have been revived in modern interpretations for today's Traditional rooms. You may also use the new two-tone and self-tone fern, floral, and leaf designs. Orientals or plain, solid-color broadlooms in wine, cinnamon-brown, green, and blue shades all provide gracious backgrounds for eighteenth-century furniture, as do gray and beige broadlooms of the pile or textured varieties.

Early American

Especially suitable for Early American rooms are the faithful reproductions of old hand-hooked rugs. Copies of early geometric and floral patterns can add warmth and gaiety to a home done in this spirit. Rugs and carpets with definite texture interest suggest a "homespun" effect which also belongs to the Provincial style.

Tone-on-tone leaf pattern in an eighteenth-century dining room. *(Courtesy of The American Home)*

Contemporary interpretation of Early American hooked-rug pattern in a Provincial room.
(Courtesy of The American Home)

A textured room-sized rug in a Modern living room.

A sculptured Modern rug enhances a Traditional dining room. (*Courtesy of The American Home.*)

(*Courtesy of Libertyville Textiles.*)

Shaggy cotton rug adapts itself to an informal interior.

Clipped low-pile cotton rug in a Modern bed-sitting room.

(*Courtesy of Montgomery Ward and Co. and The American Home.*)

Textured cotton carpeting in a Traditional setting. *(Courtesy of The American Home.)*

(Courtesy of George Mallinson Importing Co.)

Woven cotton carpeting is a smart addition to a Provincial interior. Amsterdam Textiles.

Modern

For Modern interiors, textured or pile carpets and rugs in subtle colorings are the best choice. Muted shades of blue, green, tan, and gray harmonize with Modern light furniture woods and offer a contrast to the clear, bright colors of Modern fabrics. Subtle tone-on-tone designs in pale colors can add pattern interest to a Contemporary scheme.

COTTON RUGS

Our early American grandmothers appreciated the usefulness and warmth that braided and hooked cotton rugs gave to their floors. So there is nothing new about using cotton for floor coverings. It has been a faithful stand-by in America throughout the years, both as a fiber for clothes and for home decoration. The cheerfulness of ruffled curtains at casement windows and the quaint charm of gaily colored rugs before an open fireplace bring to mind the familiar Provincial dwellings of our forebears.

Cotton rugs are likewise in keeping with Contemporary interiors. Their texture and color, their washability and informal simplicity, all stamp them with the mark of the twentieth century. Because there are many types of cotton rugs, it is important to know what kind of service you may expect from them and where they may best be used.

Types and Styles of Cotton Rugs

1. Textured
2. Hooked
3. Braided
4. Rag

Textured Cotton Rugs

Textured cotton rugs are among the newest and most decorative types of floor covering available. They can be adapted to suit any informal interior. Many are reversible and are easily washed. Their distinctive nubbiness and shagginess are the result of the treatment and character of the yarns used and of their construction.

Hooked Cotton Rugs

Hooked rugs are produced in various parts of this country and Canada by native families who have been making rugs for generations. Constructed of knitted sock tops from mill cuttings, they are a folk art, or handicraft, which helps conserve material and adds a decorative charm to Provincial interiors. They are hooked to a backing on which a stenciled pattern has been outlined. The edges are then reinforced and hand-stitched all around.

Braided Cotton Rugs

Braiding is the intertwining of three or more fabric strips. If the size of the strips is varied, interesting textures are attained, and, if the color of the strips is changed, a very gay effect may be achieved. Braided rugs are especially appropriate with Early American furnishings.

Rag Rugs

The handmade rag rugs that gave the homes of our great-grandmothers much of their charm are now reproduced by machine. In one type, strips of dyed cotton cloth are used in place of yarns in a plain weave. The hit-and-miss colors of rag rugs make them gay and practical for Early American settings.

Quality

A good cotton rug has a firm, even weave, or construction, is thick enough to lie flat, and has well-finished edges. In a pile rug, the closeness of the pile yarn is important, though the length of the pile is a matter of personal preference. Loop pile should be solidly gripped to the backing, so that, if one loop pulls out, it will not ravel out or displace all the others in the same row. Before you buy, it is wise to separate the pile to examine the construction and also look on the wrong side of the rug to see whether the stitching is close and tight.

Wear

Cotton is a very durable fiber and resists the sort of friction that footsteps give a rug. If it is well woven, a cotton rug can be depended on to give long and satisfactory service. Laboratory tests have shown that a cotton rug gives wear at least equal to that of a wool rug of the same price.

(Courtesy of George Mallinson Importing Co.)

A woven cotton rug in an oatmeal mixture in an Early American living room. Amsterdam Textiles.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

Cotton braided rug is right for a boy's bedroom.

(Courtesy of Klearflax Linen Looms, Inc.)

A flax rug in a tweed-like pattern is a smart combination with Modern furnishings.

fiber room-sized rug in a subtle plaid for adjoining rooms. *(Courtesy of Deltox Rug Co., Marjorie Thorsch, decorator.)*

Rug Cushions

Cotton carpets and rugs should be laid over rug cushions, not only to prolong their life and to deaden sound but also to give them more depth and a softer tread.

Cleaning

Most cotton rugs can be vacuumed with safety—even shaggy ones, for the suction is not heavy enough to dislodge the pile. Light, all-over dinginess can be removed by the use of any of the standard rug-cleaning powders. These contain a cleaning agent which absorbs surface dirt. The powder should be sprinkled over the rug and worked down among the yarns with a stiff brush. After the proper period of time, it should be vacuumed out again. This method of cleaning is especially desirable for wall-to-wall carpeting and room-sized rugs.

Frequent, thorough cleaning lengthens the wear of any cotton rug. Carpets and large rugs should be entrusted to a professional rug cleaner because handling them at home is most difficult. To wash a small rug at home, force thick, warm suds made with a good commercial soap that does not contain caustic through the rug until all soil is released. More than one suds bath may be required if the soil is heavy. Then rinse gently with several changes of warm water until the final rinse is entirely clear. Do not twist the rug or put it through a wringer. Excess water should be squeezed out between the hands and the rug placed across two lines. After it is completely dry, the pile, if any, may be fluffed up by gentle rubbing.

RUGS MADE OF FLAX

The story of texture is nowhere better told in a floor covering than in a linen rug. Carpeting is the heaviest linen fabric manufactured, and because of their great weight, linen rugs are very sturdy. Although they are rough to the touch when new, this roughness is a guarantee of purity. It soon wears away, as in a pure linen towel, and the rugs become softer on the surface with use. Linen rugs are firm, with a lively feeling—qualities much to be desired in rugs and carpets of all types. Because of the textural interest and tweedy effect caused by the designs and colors of linen rugs, they are exceptionally smart with Modern furniture.

Geometric inlaid linoleum in a Colonial hall. *(Courtesy of Armstrong Cork Co.)*

Linoleum in a striated effect for a Modern dual-purpose room. *(Courtesy of Armstrong Cork Co.)*

Inlaid linoleum is practical for a boy's bedroom. *(Courtesy of Armstrong Cork Co.)*

Inlaid linoleum for a Victorian dinette. *(Courtesy of Congoleum-Nairn, Inc.)*

Cork tile floor in a Modern bedroom. *(Courtesy of Kentile, David E. Kennedy, Inc.)*

(Courtesy of Kentile, David E. Kennedy, Inc.)

Asphalt tile floor gives a dramatic effect to a Modern hallway.

Linen rugs wear as well as any floor covering made of wool or cotton. Daily cleaning with a carpet sweeper, weekly cleaning with a vacuum cleaner, and seasonal professional cleaning are recommended for them.

HARD-SURFACE FLOOR COVERINGS

Gone are the days when linoleum or rubber-tile flooring was seen only in the kitchen or bathroom. Now they are used with decorative charm in every room of the house. Not only are their colors and designs smart and new with Modern schemes, but they can be used attractively with Traditional interiors also. Many housekeepers prefer hard-surface floor coverings to soft, because they are functional, easy to maintain, and clean cut in appearance.

A number of materials are used for making hard-surface floor coverings. Among the most popular is "battleship," or "inlaid," linoleum. This is linoleum at its best and most durable. It comes in several thicknesses and, naturally, areas that receive the heaviest traffic should have the thickest grades. Linoleum ⅛ inch thick should be laid on a floor that is given daily wear such as a hall, living-room, or dining-room floor. For the floor of a guest room, bedroom, or boy's room, linoleum 1/16 inch in thickness is adequate.

In the better grades of linoleum, the colors go all the way through to the back. In the cheaper grades, they are imprinted on the surface, and the pattern will wear off. Furthermore, the backing of cheap linoleum is made of asphalt-saturated felt, so that it will not give long service. Linoleum may be used as a background for wool or cotton rugs or alone. In either case, it is wise to have it waxed before using and keep it waxed as needed. Wax improves its appearance and adds to its durability.

There are many beautiful colors and patterns to be found in today's high-quality linoleum. For a Modern interior, why not try white or pale gray with a black border? A light-colored linoleum tends to make a room seem larger and affords a simple background for almost any decorative scheme. Geometric patterns and pale solid colors with contrasting borders are always smart and effective in Contemporary settings. Or you might consider a lovely pastel, such as lime green, beige, or lemon yellow. For children's rooms, navy blue and terra cotta are good. They are handsome, easy to keep clean, and provide a practical, hygienic playground for the young.

In patterned linoleums, the designs are "inlaid," or inset, into backgrounds of a different color. There are many lovely geometric or scrolled designs, the beauty of which is limited only by the skill of the craftsman who does the cutting and inlaying. Your choice of pattern, design, and color in a floor covering should be governed by the decorative plan of the room. For an Early American, pine-paneled room, you might use marbleized beige linoleum to harmonize with the toast color of the walls. In a Modern room with gray walls, a matching gray linoleum floor would be effective.

The life of linoleum is often dependent on how it is laid. It is best to have a smooth floor underneath and have the linoleum cemented over a layer of felt. In many old houses, where the floors are not made of hardwood or where the surfaces are badly worn, a new linoleum covering can solve the problem of having a good background for wool or cotton rugs.

Among the other new hard-surface floor coverings are cork, rubber and asphalt tile, and a new vinyl plastic covering in tile or sheet form. The latter is both greaseproof and alcohol-resistant. Cork comes in soft colors of beige and medium or dark brown. It is more resilient than rubber, is very pleasant to walk on, and the colors recommend it for Early American and Modern interiors.

For almost any room in a Modern or informal home, rubber and asphalt tiles are growing in popularity. They compare favorably, both in price and effectiveness, with the best grade of linoleum. They are made of a rubber composition that is highly resilient and extremely durable. Because of their color range, they can be used to harmonize with almost any color scheme. Black-and-white tiles are suitable for a hallway, and solid black makes a good background for shaggy cotton or wool rugs in either Modern or Traditional rooms. In Early American or wood-paneled rooms, beige tones are best. For any functional Modern or Provincial scheme, a floor covering of rubber or asphalt tile is a sound choice.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Bedding

Much of your energy and health depends on how well you sleep. Six hours of sleep on good bedding may give you the same amount of rest as nine hours on poor. Do you know that your mattress, springs, and pillow get more wear than any other articles in your house? Do you realize that poor bedding can spoil your comfort as completely as poorly fitted shoes?

Individual tastes in bedding vary as much as individual tastes in furniture and fashions. Each member of the family has different needs. A boy may like a hard cotton-felt mattress, while a young girl may prefer a soft innerspring mattress.

HOW TO SELECT BEDDING

Here are the bedding values you should look for:

1. Comfort, which depends on good springs and good filling materials
2. Long service, which depends on the quality of the materials and the workmanship
3. Easy handling, which depends on light construction, sturdy seams, and strong handles
4. Good value for the price, which depends on the manufacturer's guarantee, the reliability of a nationally advertised name, and the backing of a good store

MATTRESSES

Most mattresses look alike. You can no more tell a good mattress by its ticking than you can tell a good book by its cover. The following facts about mattress types and construction will help you to make a sound and intelligent selection.

The Innerspring Mattress

It is only about fifteen years since innerspring mattresses were launched on a large scale. Today they far outnumber any other variety. They consist of a sleeping cushion or upholstery attached to both sides of a resilient spring unit.

Basically, the innerspring mattress is a set of fine springs added to a top mattress, a combination that produces a restful and luxurious bed.

Metal-tied Type

In the metal-tied type of innerspring mattress, the coils are joined together by helical springs or metal ties or both. Metal-tied units have coils somewhat larger than pocket-tied units.

Pocket-tied Type

The coils of the pocket-tied type are made of very springy wire, usually barrel-like or cylindrical in shape, and are encased in muslin. The advantage of pocketed coil construction is that it gives the coils great independence and freedom of action.

Types of Mattress Filling

The upholstery of an innerspring mattress is often made of cotton linters, which are felted into layers and therefore referred to as cotton felt. A layer of cotton felt topped by a layer of curled hair is less expensive than all hair for mattress construction.

Latex is a new material found in mattresses of the upper price bracket. Used in the form of a thin cushion on top of a cotton mattress, latex gives a feeling of luxurious resiliency. It is made of "foam rubber," is long-wearing, and because of its resiliency, conforms readily to the contours of the body.

The Cotton Mattress

Many persons prefer the solid support given by a fine all-cotton, pad-type of mattress. Do not make the mistake of looking on cotton mattresses as cheap. The best ones cost considerably more than the average innerspring mattress. Aside from the grade of ticking and the workmanship involved, the grade of cotton used in a cotton mattress makes a difference in its quality.

All better grade cotton mattresses are built of layers of cotton felt. A good cotton mattress will last many years and is easy to care for. It can be rolled without injury and will become more fluffy if aired in the sunshine. Inferior cotton mattresses soon lose their shape and get hard and lumpy.

The Kapok Mattress

Kapok, the silky fiber of the seed pod of a tropical tree, makes a light, soft mattress. The kapok mattress should be sunned frequently, to prevent the fibers from becoming lumpy. It is comfortable but not so durable as an innerspring or cotton mattress; if the kapok is packed in compartments, this adds to its durability.

The Latex Mattress

The all-latex mattress, an entirely new type, is buoyant and extremely resilient. It is made by whipping latex, the milklike sap of the rubber tree, into a foam and then vulcanizing or heat-curing it in a mattress mold. In addition to the naturally porous quality of the whipped latex, the mattress is honeycombed with large cells which give it still more resilience. It is very durable and has the advantage of adjusting more readily to the body contours than any other type of mattress. For anyone who likes a soft, buoyant mattress, latex is a good choice.

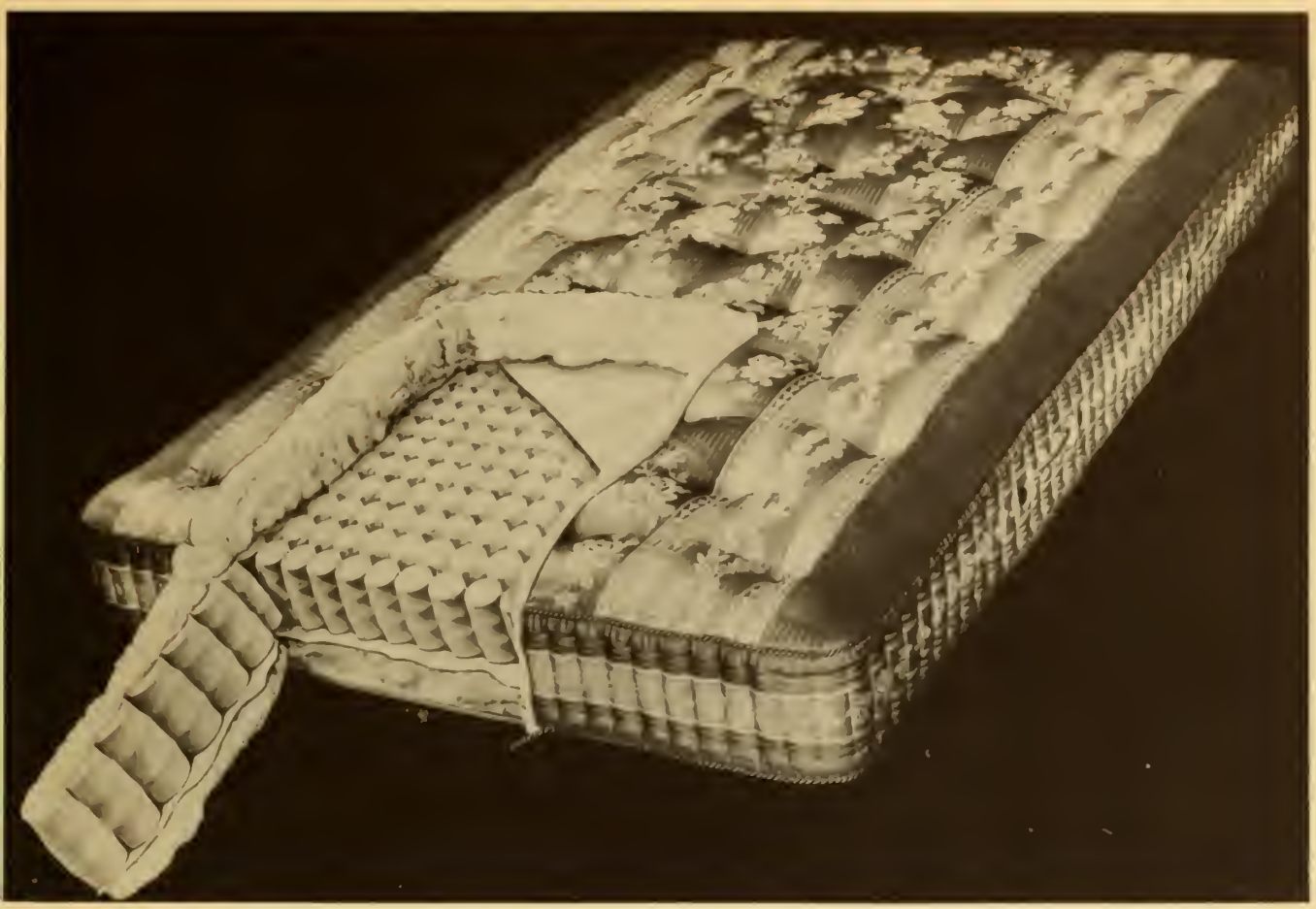
BEDSPRINGS

Metal-fabric bedsprings are of two types: link, and slat or band. *Link springs* are made of wire links, attached to the frame of the bed with helicals. The link-type spring is inexpensive and likely to sag.

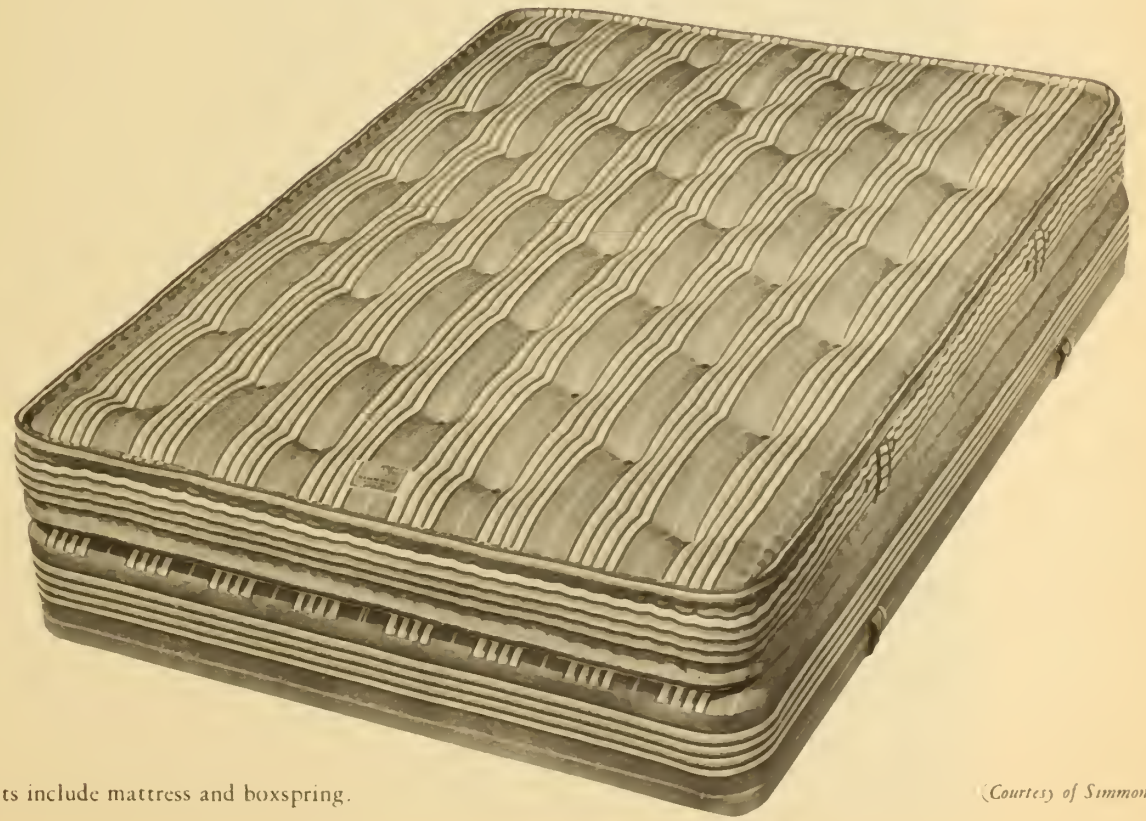
The *slat-* or *band-type spring* has steel slats fastened to the frame with helicals or wire cross locks. This is another inexpensive spring, but the better grade gives comfortable service with an innerspring mattress.

The *open-coil spring* is an uncovered bedspring composed of spiral coils mounted in a frame and resting on metal slats. It cannot be used with an innerspring mattress, because the mattress will work down into the open coils, and the spring unit in the mattress will tend to break. However, it can be used with a cotton mattress.

The *platform-top spring* has a closed top which prevents an innerspring or latex mattress from cupping down into the spiral coils. The top may be closed in a number of different ways—by narrow steel bands, by sealing the heads of the coils with extra turns of wire, or by spreading a woven wire sheet over the entire coil unit.



Pocket-tied innerspring mattress. *(Courtesy of Simmons Co.)*



Matching units include mattress and boxspring. *(Courtesy of Simmons Co.)*

Sectional sofa bed. *(Courtesy of Simmons Co.)*

A sectional sofa that opens into a comfortable bed. *(Courtesy of Pullman Couch Co.)*

Sofa which converts into double bed. *(Courtesy of Simmons Co.)*

Studio bed which converts into twin beds. *(Courtesy of Simmons Co.)*

(Courtesy of Herman Miller Furniture Co.)

Double-duty headboard beds, adjustable to reading position. Designed by George Nelson.

The *box spring* is an upholstered type of bedspring, consisting of spiral springs attached to a foundation, enclosed in a boxlike frame, and padded on top with a thin cushion of cotton felt. In better box springs, the coils are hand-tied by special cords to each other, to the frame, and to the border. This supplies them with uniform resiliency and durability. The coils and padding are covered with ticking to match the mattress.

MATCHED UNITS

For every mattress, there is a corresponding box spring. The two are styled and designed to go together. A soft innerspring mattress requires a firm box spring. Conversely, a firm mattress needs only a light box spring.

PILLOWS

A pillow's filling is far more important than its cover. If you know the qualities of each filling you can select the pillow giving the most service and comfort.

1. *Down* is the soft, fluffy layer of very fine feathers that grows underneath the regular feathers of any bird. Down pillows are luxurious, for down is the softest pillow filling available. That is why it is used for baby pillows. Down mixed with regular feathers makes a lighter-than-ordinary pillow and helps prevent the regular feathers from matting or lumping.

2. *Goose feathers* make the best of all fillings because they are springy and resilient. A good grade of goose feathers produces a pillow slightly firmer and more buoyant than the down pillow.

3. *Duck feathers* are similar in construction to goose feathers but are not so resilient, fluffy, or strong.

4. Both *chicken* and *turkey feathers* are artificially curled to give them some of the springiness natural to waterfowl feathers. After a few years they lose their artificial curl and become "dead." Chicken and turkey feathers are heavier than waterfowl feathers and are used for inexpensive pillows.

STUDIO COUCHES, HOLLYWOOD BEDS, AND SOFA BEDS

The modern trend toward smaller houses and apartments has created a demand for pieces of furniture that will look suitable in the living room by day and may be converted into beds by night. By far the most functional of these are the studio couch and the sofa bed.

For many years the studio couch has provided the extra bed that most homemakers need. In its simplest form, it consists of two parts, set one on top of the other, each containing upholstered box springs. When a set of six straight legs is attached to the springs, the unit is called a "Hollywood bed." It may also have a cotton-felt or innerspring mattress. Modern studio couches and Hollywood beds are available in many styles and can be used appropriately in living room, study, bedroom, or guest room. They may be slip-covered to suit the decorative plan of the room.

The sofa bed is a newer development. It is equal in quality of workmanship to a good bed or sofa. It contains an ingeniously concealed sleeping unit. The best sofa beds are made in simple styles and are covered in friezé, tapestry, leather, or other fine upholstery fabrics. Unless someone has to sleep on it every night, the advantages of the sofa bed outweigh those of the studio couch or Hollywood bed, because of its more attractive appearance and superior seating comfort. A Lawson-type sofa bed will harmonize with any decorative scheme.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Lamps — Pictures — Accessories

Accessories contribute to a room as seasoning does to good food. We all know that plain, well-cooked food is nutritious but rather uninteresting. So is a room that has good furniture and an attractive color scheme but nothing else. It is dull and incomplete until it receives the "flavor" of accessories, chosen by personal taste. When accessories are selected with care, and attention is given to their appropriateness, they can make a room look lived-in and homey. Some people think they are unimportant and add them to a room in a hit-or-miss fashion: Perhaps they use only such gifts as are presented to them by well-meaning friends. Their room is then apt to look like a woman who wears a beautiful, well-made dress with too much jewelry and an unbecoming hat. Before using any accessory, ask yourself if it conforms to your standards of good taste and will harmonize with your other furnishings. Badly selected accessories can pull the taste level of a room way down. Too many accessories, which give it a cluttered appearance, can do the same thing.

LAMPS

Chief among the accessories essential to every room are lamps. They have a twofold importance: they supply light and decorative accents. Your choice of lamps may either enhance or detract from the charm and comfort of your furniture groupings. Lamps should always be selected for their functional value, beauty, and suitability.

How often have you seen a large sofa flanked by end tables on which stand low, insignificant lamps? How often have you tried to read in a comfortable chair that has a lamp of such a height beside it that it is a strain on your eyes? And have you ever seen lamps of all sizes in the same room, making the place look like a jumble of unrelated objects?

A few simple rules will help to guide you in making a good lamp selection.

1. For low-arm sofas with matching end tables, use table lamps 25 to 28 inches high. These will be in good proportion and will provide adequate light for reading.

2. Next to high-back chairs, such as wing chairs, use floor lamps 58 to 63 inches tall. For lounge chairs with low arms, have junior floor lamps, about 55 to 58 inches high.

3. Keep lamps in the same room at the same height, if possible. Otherwise, relate the height of each lamp to the group of furniture it serves. For example, a grand piano may require a single floor lamp which is higher than the pair of table lamps next to a sofa.

4. Every lounge chair must have a reading light of proper height, either a floor lamp of 58 to 63 inches or a table lamp of 25 to 28 inches. Tall table lamps should go on low tables and short lamps on high tables. The height of any table and lamp together must not be less than 55 inches.

5. Table lamps come in a variety of shapes and heights. In recent years there has been a growing trend toward the use of overscaled table lamps. The 28-inch lamp was introduced by decorators before World War II, and since then lamps of even taller stature have been designed. Some are as high as 36 inches. These naturally give a good light. They cannot be placed on tables that are over 24 inches high, as the light they cast would then be too far above the head of a person using it to be practical. More than two such lamps do not look well in the average small living room. They may be used in pairs at the ends of sofas or, singly, on any but very small or very high tables.

Lamps for Formal Traditional Rooms

In every store you will find an assortment of lamps of all kinds, styles, and materials. To the novice, this is confusing. If you are seeking table lamps for an eighteenth-century scheme, however, choose those made of glass, china, silver, or brass, in urn or vase shapes. They are usually topped with plain silk

Examples of Poor Reading Light.

End tables must always be height of sofa arm. *(Courtesy of Widdicomb Furniture Co.)*

Keep all lamps at same height in room. *(Courtesy of Grand Rapids Furniture Makers Guild)*

Avoid tables too high for chair arms and beware of tiny lamps with big chairs.

(*Courtesy of See Mar*

Lamp end table provides good reading light beside a lounge chair.

Matching floor lamps at proper height add dignity and decorative charm to a modern sofa. (*Courtesy of Widdicomb Furniture Co*

(Courtesy of Nelson Lebo, Inc.)

(Courtesy of Nelson Lebo, Inc.)

Lamps for formal Traditional rooms.

(Courtesy of Nelson Lebo, Inc.)

(Courtesy of Frederick Cooper Studios)

(*Courtesy of Frederick Cooper Studios.*)

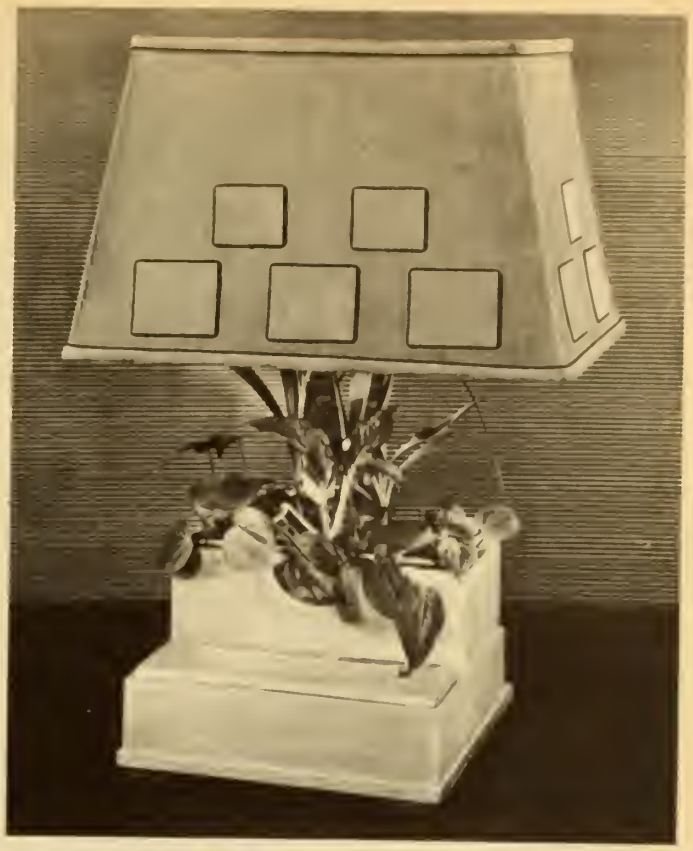
(*Courtesy of Savage of California*)

Lamps for Provincial rooms.

(*Courtesy of See Mar*)

(*Courtesy of Lightolier, Inc*)

(*Courtesy of See Mar.*)



(*Courtesy of See Mar.*)

Lamps for Modern rooms.

(*Courtesy of See Mar.*)

(*Courtesy of See Mar.*)

Framed glass pictures are news in bed-reading lights. They shed glareless light directly downward (*Courtesy of Lightolier, Inc.*)

or shantung shades or paper shades that are opaque or translucent. Avoid lamps in fancy shapes with fussy shades and too much trimming. You may also select lamps with Chinese figurine or "pillow" bases or lamps of old Meissen or Staffordshire china. They will add dignity and formal charm to any room. If you need a floor lamp, try one of walnut, mahogany, or Colonial brass.

Lamps for Provincial Rooms

Your choice of lamps for an informal scheme is wide and varied. Any crude shape that has a primitive, handicraft feeling will be in keeping. You may buy lamps with brass, copper, pewter, pottery, wood, or glass bases, in the form of candlesticks, jugs, or kettles. If you want a bit of whimsy, you can easily find ship's lanterns, butter tubs, sugar bowls, and coffee mills that have been converted into lighting fixtures for Early American interiors. Floor lamps of tole, maple, pewter, brass, or wrought iron can also be used. They should have shades of parchment paper or of a fabric that repeats the materials used in the room, such as chintz, homespun, gingham, calico, or percale.

Lamps for Modern Rooms

The story of Modern lamps is the same as that of Modern fabrics. It is textural interest that counts. Polished or limned bases in woods of exotic colors and grains, leather columns, brushed brass or aluminum, plaster or pottery bases in free forms can all add interest and beauty to a Contemporary setting. The shapes both of Modern shades and bases should be simple and unornamented, leaving the beauty of the materials to speak for themselves.

MIRRORS

Mirrors may be used in Modern homes to give an illusion of increased space. They may be hung in the hall over a console table, in the living room over the mantel or a sofa, in the bedroom over a chest or dressing table.

Quality

The Mirror Manufacturers Association and the National Bureau of Standards have placed all mirrors in five commercial grades. These are designated as AA, A, No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3.

AA quality is the highest. This includes the most perfect mirrors that can be manufactured.

A quality has no major defects, but there may be a few scattered "bubbles" in the glass.

Number 1 quality is high. The mirrors are free from defects in the central area, although the plate glass may contain certain inherent flaws.

Number 2 quality may have scattered bubbles, light scratches, or a wavy defect known as a "bull's-eye." This type of mirror is sold with inexpensive furniture.

Number 3 quality may contain all the defects found in plate glass.

Type

There are two general types of mirrors: the framed and the unframed. Frames are made of wood—of mahogany, maple, walnut, or birch in dark, bleached or gilded finishes. Single, double, and triple beveled edges are used around the glass of both framed and unframed models.

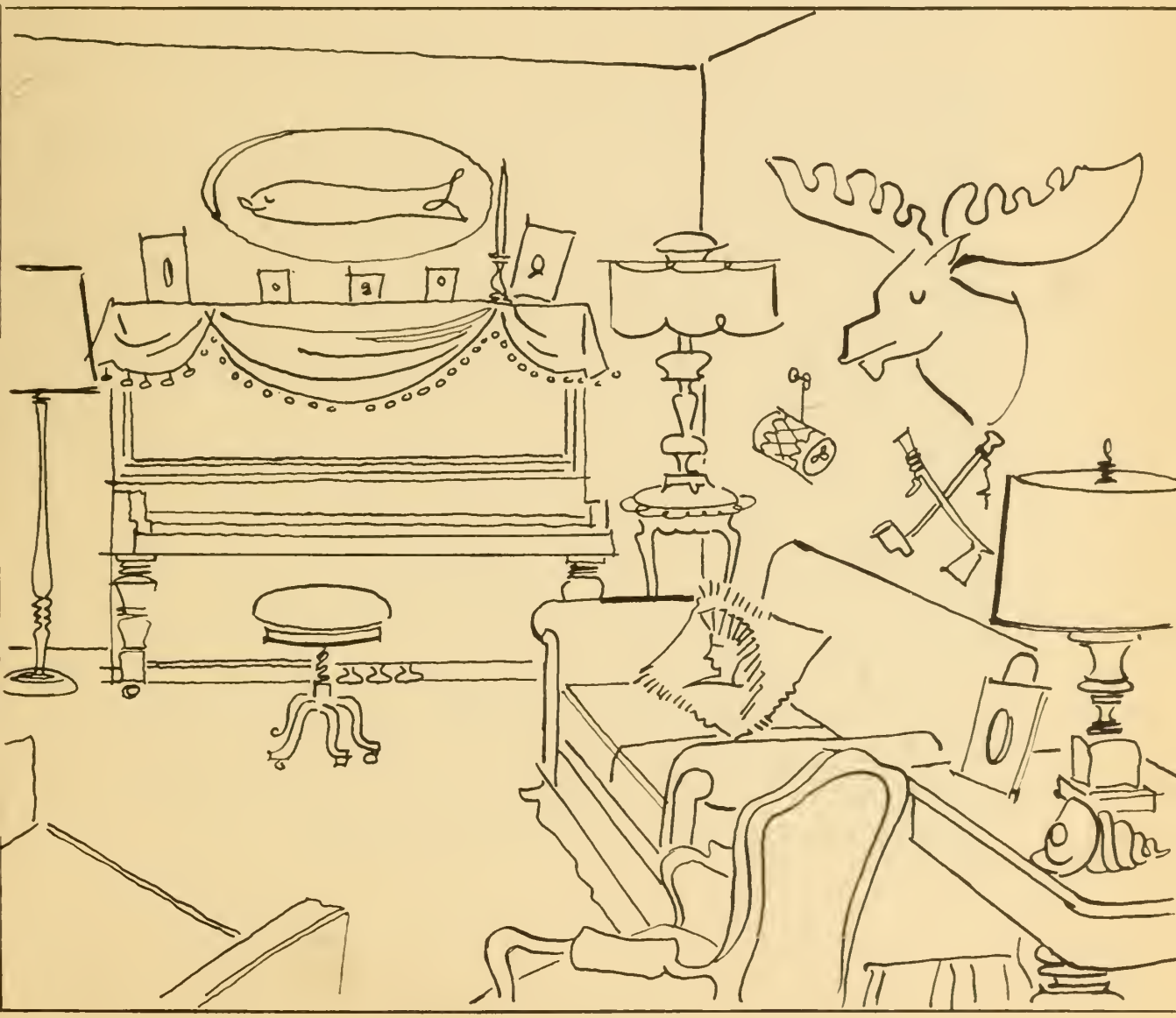
The relation of any mirror to the furniture group or object it serves is of paramount importance. A small mirror placed over the middle of a sofa will be completely out of balance and in bad scale. A large oblong mirror, hung so that its center is at eye level for an average-height person standing in front of it, will be in good scale and properly related to the sofa group. Likewise, a small mirror over a large mantel will be out of scale and in bad balance. A mirror that is the width of the mantel and extends to the ceiling will be suitable and decorative.

Unframed mirrors are particularly attractive in Modern rooms. They may be used over chests, bookshelves, sofas, or love seats, desks, or mantels. The oblong or square models, which continue the simple, effective lines of Contemporary furniture, are best. A mirror will add height to low, horizontal Modern pieces and depth to a room of small dimensions.

Maple-framed mirrors are appropriate with Early American furniture. Some of the models are true copies of Early American styles. These are either plain and oblong in shape or have broken pediments with finials at the top. In the living room, a maple-framed mirror flanked by pictures over a sofa or mantel will make an interesting wall group. For the bedroom, the design of the frame and the color of the wood should be related to the chest or dressing table the mirror serves.

Pictures in bad scale.

Pictures in good scale.



Age of clutter—1900.

Many kinds of mirrors are appropriate for an eighteenth-century scheme, as there are many copies available of original designs by master craftsmen. Chippendale, Sheraton, Adam, and Hepplewhite all made mirrors to go with their chests and buffets for living rooms, dining rooms, and bedrooms. The gold bull's-eye mirror with eagle decoration is always suitable in a Traditional home. In general, mirrors in mahogany and walnut or those with dull gold frames may be used appropriately in any eighteenth-century room.

PICTURES

Like the jewelry a woman wears, the pictures in a house can make or mar its beauty. The same rules that apply to the proper use of mirrors can be applied to the proper use of pictures. They must be the right size and hung in correct relation to their furniture groups. Balance and scale should never be forgotten. The frames should be in keeping with the other room furnishings.

In general, still lifes—of fruits and flowers—belong in the dining room. Floral and costume prints are used in the bedroom. For the living room, landscapes, seascapes, street scenes, historic scenes, bird and hunting prints, and good reproductions of contemporary and classical paintings are recommended. Chinese prints and portraits in simple frames add interest to any room.

Often a picture furnishes the decorative theme of a room. The colors used in the picture are picked up in the upholstered pieces and accessories. At other times, a picture will provide a necessary color accent. Beware of cheap lithographs and garishly colored prints of the calendar or poster type.

Pictures may be hung singly, in pairs, or in groups, according to their size and shape. A small picture placed over the center of a large sofa will be out of balance with the sofa. A large picture or a group of small pictures should be used instead, depending on the size of the wall space and of the sofa.

Beware of hanging small pictures in "steps"; the only place this is permissible is on a stairway. To give unity to pictures of assorted sizes, have them matted and framed alike. Then hang them in a row or in groups of two, four, six, or eight at average eye level.

In general, large pictures should be hung so that the center of interest is at eye level for persons standing before them. They should be hung flat against the wall, with the hooks and cords entirely concealed. It is a good habit to watch the home-furnishings pages of newspapers and national magazines for new ways of arranging and using pictures to achieve decorative effects.

SMALL OBJECTS

The smaller accessories—such as cigarette boxes, ash trays, figurines, bowls, vases, and plants—need to be considered as carefully as the larger ones. They come in so many different varieties, both old and new, Modern and antique, that a few simple suggestions to help clarify your selection will be useful.

When most people add the finishing touches to a room, they go to one of two extremes. Either they fill it so full of accessories of assorted sizes and kinds that its originally good decoration is obscured, or else they leave it so bare that it looks uninhabited.

Use discrimination in your choice and see that each small object fits the general feeling of your room. Do not think that because you have received a present you must keep it forever as an ornament. It may be well meant but wholly unsuitable. Do not bring back "tourist" souvenirs from your vacation to tear down the room's beauty rating.

In an eighteenth-century room, do not use Modern things, such as shiny chromium lamps or cigarette boxes. You may use silver, china, glass, or wood accessories in Traditional forms. In a Modern room, do not have elaborate French china boxes or figurines with hoop skirts and lace. Instead, have plain Modern shapes in bowls, cigarette boxes, and ash trays. The simplicity of their design and the texture of their materials will harmonize with the setting. Free forms in pottery or plaster, metals or bleached woods, are also suitable. In a provincial house use Provincial accessories—antiques or copies of old pieces made in informal materials such as pewter, old copper, handmade glass, and crude pottery.

Above all, do not become so accustomed to your living room that you no longer see it. Keep a fresh, objective point of view. An annual inventory, taken with a critical eye, is a wise system. Each year, try to evaluate every small object in your room. Decide for yourself whether or not the accessories have been used and if they are still both beautiful and functional. In this way, you can keep your home contemporary. It is often the "little things" that help to make a room charming and hospitable—a place where happiness abides.

Maple mirror with broken pediment and finial. *(Courtesy of Mengel Co.)*

A Traditional mirror in good scale with the spinet piano.

Too many pictures and trophies can overwhelm a room. *(Set of The Farmer's Daughter, Courtesy of R.K.O.)*

A lovely wall arrangement of four pictures. *(Courtesy of The American Home.)*

(Courtesy of Sue Egan, decorator, and Popular Home, United States Gypsum Co.)

A group of eight flower prints framed in black to match the sofa.

(Courtesy of The American Home.)

Russian ballet prints frame a dinette window

(Courtesy of Carson, Pirie, Scott and Co.)

A group of maps highlight an English hunt table with a group of Windsor chairs.

A group of eighteenth-century accessories. *(Courtesy of Hugh Edmiston, Quon-Quon Co. and Martin Freeman Co.)*

A group of Provincial accessories. *(Courtesy of Klemberg Brothers, Polly Perkins and Savage of California)*

A charming Provincial room with suitable accessories. *(Courtesy of The American Home)*

A group of Modern accessories. *(Courtesy of Martin Freeman Co.)*

(Courtesy of See Mar and William H. Fenton Co.)

er-scaled Modern coffee table with suitable accessories.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

China — Glass — Table Settings

CHINA

In most homes, the dining table is the center of social life. Around it the family gathers every day. Just as the fireside is the focal point of interest in the average American living room, so the dining table is the focal point of hospitality in the average American household. In order to have a lovely table, it is important to know how to combine the right glassware with the right china. The rules for this are much the same as the rules for decorating a home.

When you select china and glass, you choose two of the most delightful and decorative things in the world. Owning pretty china and glass is one of the real pleasures of homemaking. To set a beautiful table affords enjoyment to hostess, family, and guests.

Some of us have inherited our taste as well as our dishes from parents and grandparents. Stored in the extra cupboards is the fine china, reserved for special occasions, which we treasure because of its nostalgic association with the past and its traditional beauty. Most of it came originally from the countries of Europe.

For hundreds of years now fine china has been made by the famous potters of England. Such names as Spode, Wedgwood, Minton, Crown Derby, and Royal Worcester are familiar to us all. Many of the beautiful Traditional china patterns we use today were designed by these potters during the eighteenth century, when the golden era of decoration was at its peak. To us, their patterns are "forever England," and rightfully so.

On the continent of Europe, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Sweden, and Italy have long been noted for their fine wares. Names like Meissen and Dresden in Germany, Sèvres and Haviland in France, and Capo di Monte in Italy are attached to the best products we have imported from these countries for generations. Since the war, these factories have revived production and once again we may see in our stores the lovely china peculiar to other lands.

The term "china" has, through common usage, come to apply to all objects made of clay. It was originally derived from the country, China, where

the first delicate porcelain was created. Marco Polo discovered this in his travels and brought it back to Europe. Today, the finest "china" we have is porcelain, which means that the clay is fired under great heat, making it highly vitrified, nonporous, and translucent. If bone ash is added to the porcelain formula before firing, bone china is produced. This has a chalk-white, very durable body and takes on a lovely clear glaze. Most bone china is made in England, and pieces of it have long been the pride of American brides.

Besides porcelain, there are two other kinds of "china," the first of which, earthenware, is heavy and opaque. Earthenware includes most of our everyday tableware. It is fired at a less intense heat than porcelain and is therefore semi-vitrified and somewhat porous. In America today we are producing earthenware with a fine body in a variety of charming designs. English earthenware is known for its Traditional beauty. Its graceful shapes, copied from those of Georgian silver, and its scenic and floral patterns make it eminently suitable for Traditional or Provincial dining rooms.

The third type of "china," is called "pottery." It is made in nearly all countries. Often pottery is handmade, crude, and gaily decorated, like Mexican ware. Fired at a lower heat than earthenware or porcelain, it is nonvitrified, opaque, and porous. This means that it is brittle and lacks the durability of either earthenware or china. However, its bright colors and gay primitive designs of figures and flowers make up for its lacks, and it is a pleasant complement to informal dining.

Today American potters are copying the "peasanty" hand-painted patterns of Italy, Spain, France, and other countries on earthenware of good quality. In California, potters have created earthenware in new and delightful shapes and a blaze of desert colors which is suitable for informal dining both indoors and out.

You will find that there are a great many different types of patterns in China. It is by the quality of the ware and the type of pattern that the degree of formality is determined. For formal tables in Traditional dining rooms, porcelain in a simple pattern with a narrow gold or colored border is appropriate. For informal tables, earthenware in a scenic or floral design is suitable.

In Provincial dining rooms, you may use earthenware in scenic and floral patterns or bright-colored pottery for informal dining. For special occasions, the English earthenware of Spode, Wedgwood, or one of the other famous potteries is recommended.

(*Courtesy of Theodore Haviland and Co.*)

(*Courtesy of Theodore Haviland and Co.*)

Two formal place settings in fine china.

(*Courtesy of Josiah Wedgwood and Co., Inc.*)

(*Courtesy of Josiah Wedgwood and Co., Inc.*)

Two formal table settings of fine English earthenware.

Spode's "Florence"

Spode's "Pink Camellia"

Spode's "Reynolds"

Spode's "Pink Tower"

(Courtesy of Copeland and Thompson, Inc.)

Four distinguished patterns of English earthenware in eighteenth-century designs.

(*Courtesy of Southern Potteries*)

(*Courtesy of Southern Potteries*)

Free-hand underglaze decoration in peasant style.

(*Courtesy of Winfield Division, American Ceramic Products Corp.*)

(*Courtesy of La Mirada Division, American Ceramic Products Corp.*)

California earthenware in Modern design.

For Contemporary interiors, choose earthenware, pottery, or porcelain in Modern shapes and solid colors or subtle pastel tones. Be sure to combine it with glassware and linens that are equally new in design and texture.

GLASS

Stemware, Tumblers, and Plates

Stemware includes any glass with a bowl, stem, and base, such as a water- or wineglass. A tumbler is a stemless drinking glass. Sometimes, Modern design makes it difficult to draw the line between the two. Stems may be tall and graceful or so short that they hardly exist at all. Footed tumblers may be shaped so that they almost give the effect of having a squat stem. The shape of a glass and its purpose will determine its name.

Most stemware patterns come in a wide variety of sizes. You will probably want a basic set of stemware, including four, six, eight, or twelve water goblets. If you serve alcoholic drinks, you will need glasses for wine, cocktails, Old Fashioneds, and highballs. Sherbet glasses and orange juice glasses are also useful and should match the water goblets.

Decorative Glass

Containers for flowers and fruit and other decorations for the table should be among your most important accessories. Console sets, hurricane lamps, candlesticks, candelabra, cigarette boxes, and bookends may all be made of glass. Today's hostess may also have glass candy jars, marmalade jars, relish plates, salts and peppers, large ash trays, and salad sets.

Formal and Informal Glass Styles

It is best to select your glassware in a style that is appropriate to that of your dining-room furnishings. If you are style-minded, here are a few suggestions.

An eighteenth-century room might have etched or frosted glass with delicate floral designs or Waterford cuttings. For formal service, tall stemware might be used. For daily dining, tumblers or medium-stemmed goblets would be practical and in good taste.

Early American interiors call for pressed glass, milk glass, or crude pieces of hand-blown colored glass, such as Mexican tumblers. Modern interiors require glassware in the simplest shapes without decoration. The beauty of Modern glassware is inherent in its stylized forms and the clarity of its colors. Any applied decoration is out of key.

Sturdy-stemmed Modern glassware. *(Courtesy of A. H. Heisey and Co.)*

Bamboo-patterned drinking glasses in Modern design. *(Courtesy of Phillips Glass Co.)*

An old fruit pattern in pressed glass revived again today. *(Courtesy of Westmoreland Glass Co.)*

Hand-decorated fruit patterns on milk glass. *(Courtesy of Westmoreland Glass Co.)*

Formal stemware in an etched floral design. (*Courtesy of Fostoria Glass Co.*)

(*Courtesy of A. H. Heisey and Co.*)
Formal stemware in an etched pattern.

Informal pressed glassware. (*Courtesy of Fostoria Glass Co.*)

Informal pressed glass with a Modern feeling. (*Courtesy of A. H. Heisey and Co.*)

TABLE SETTINGS

In effective and successful table settings, the styles and patterns of china, glassware, and table linen are always related. There are an infinite number of ways of doing this. The following questions and answers will help you to compose your table settings in accordance with today's rules of etiquette.

Table Etiquette

Q. *When are tablecloths used?*

A. Plain damask or sheer organdy cloths may be used for formal dinners or luncheons. Bright, solid-colored cloths or printed florals in cotton or linen are good for informal meals. A solid-colored cloth is usually a safe choice at any time because it provides an attractive background for most dishes. A pastel green cloth, for instance, will harmonize with all kinds of floral-patterned, green-leaved plates. Multicolored cloths, on the other hand, look best with solid-colored china.

The tablecloth should have only one crease down the center and a 15-inch drop on each side. For family parties or holiday occasions, you will want an especially long cloth. This may be of Irish linen, damask, plain sheer or appliquéd organdy.

Q. *When are place mats used?*

A. Place mats may be used at any meal with formal or informal service depending on their quality. Sheer linen, organdy, and damask mats are suitable for formal dinners or luncheons in Traditional interiors. Handwoven, textured place mats look well in formal Modern settings. For informal service, the choice is very wide; plastic, straw, and cork mats, floral patterns printed on linen or cotton, coarse, nubby, hand-woven mats, and many others are appropriate. Because of the scarcity of help, place mats have become popular. They are always easier to launder than tablecloths.

Q. *How should napkins be folded and placed?*

A. Rectangular folding is correct for both formal and informal meals. Place the folded side of the napkin next to the forks. For formal service, napkins may be placed on service plates.

Q. *How should flat silver be placed on the table?*

A. Flat silver should be set in the order in which it is to be used. The pieces to be used first are placed farthest from the plate. Knives and spoons go on the right of the plate, and forks on the left.

Q. *Can bread-and-butter plates be eliminated at informal meals?*

A. As to this, the hostess may suit her own convenience. If bread-and-butter plates crowd the table, she may serve buttered rolls. Butter plates should always be placed to the left of the dinner plates, directly above the forks.

Q. *Should all the glassware on the table be of the same pattern?*

A. Yes, if possible, the glassware used throughout the meal should match.

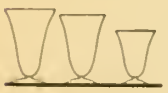
Q. *How many glasses should be on the table at one time?*

A. Today it is customary to have not more than two glasses on the table together—a goblet for water and a matching wineglass. The days of elaborate entertaining, when each place was cluttered with a wineglass suitable for each course, have passed.

Q. *Where are glasses placed on the table?*

A. Water goblets are placed above the point of the knife. Wineglasses should be placed to the right of water goblets.

Q. *Should all the china used at a meal be of the same pattern?*



A. This is optional. In formal dinners, the china is often changed between the different courses. However, for both formal and informal service, it is perfectly appropriate to use only one pattern.

Q. *When should salad be served during dinner?*

A. Salad may be served as the first or third course, or the hostess may serve it with the main course. If she does the latter, the salad plate should be placed at the left of the forks, below the bread-and-butter plate.

Q. *In what order should plates be removed?*

A. If you have soup or salad as a first course, remove the soup or salad plates before bringing in the dinner plates. Bread-and-butter plates remain on the table. Before serving dessert, remove all plates (dinner, bread-and-butter, and salad).

Q. *What height should candles be?*

A. Eighteen-inch candles are appropriate for formal tables. Generally speaking, shorter candles suit informal tables. Be sure to place candles on the table so that their flames are above or below the average eye level and do not obstruct the vision of the diners.

Q. *Are colored candles correct?*

A. Colored candles are permissible on any but the most formal tables, where white or ivory candles are preferable.

Q. *Do candles belong on a luncheon table?*

A. Definitely not. They are appropriate only after 6 P.M.

Q. *What is the correct height of a centerpiece?*

A. Never block the vision of the diners with tall flowers. A low arrangement of fruit or flowers on a table is in good taste. Always keep it in scale, neither too large nor too small for the table.

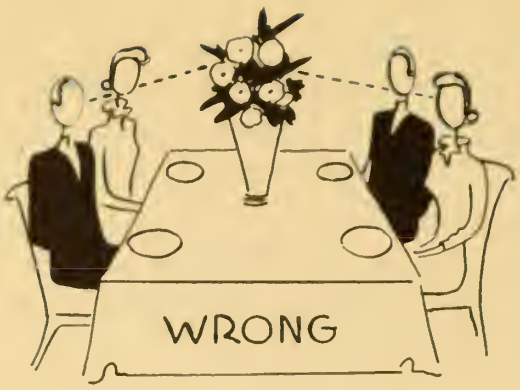
Q. *Should everything that is to be served for a buffet luncheon or supper be on the table at the same time?*

A. Usually everything that is to be served should be on the table, including plates, cups and saucers, glassware, silverware, napkins, platters, and bowls of food, except the dessert. This should be brought in later. Often it is best to serve coffee with the dessert.

Rules for Table Settings

The rules of decoration and coordination apply to table service in exactly the same way as they apply to the furnishings of a room. Study the illustrations for good ideas in formal and informal table service and buffet meals. They will show you the correct placing of china, glassware, linen, and silver. Note the position of forks, knives, and spoons in each case. Note their distance from the edge of table or place mat. Note the correct position of the napkin, butter plate, and glass.

To set a table means more than simply placing the forks on the left of the plate and the knives and spoons on the right. It means the assembling and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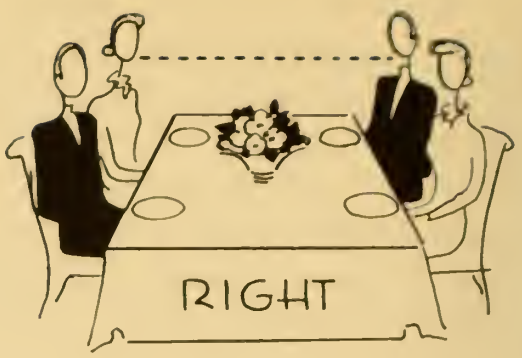
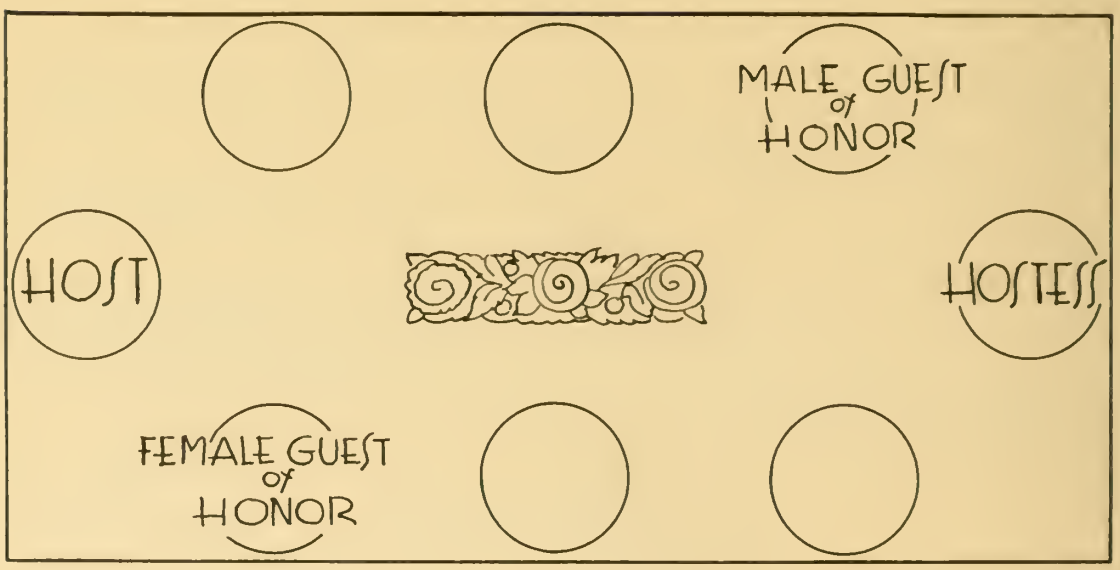
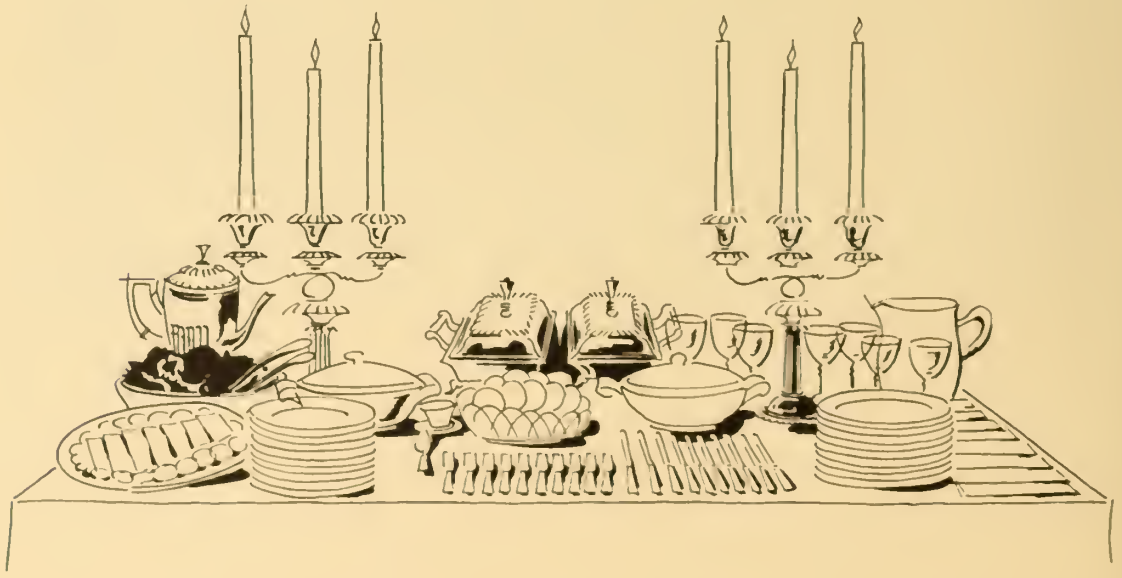

RIGHT


MALE GUEST of HONOR
HOST
HOSTESS
FEMALE GUEST of HONOR



matching of china, linen, and glassware. You would not wear sports shoes with an evening dress. Neither would you use formal porcelain with cork mats and heavy straight tumblers or plain earthenware with a lace tablecloth. And, just as you would not use two large floral-patterned chintzes in the same living room, so you would not use flowered plates on a flowered tablecloth, because pattern would compete with pattern.

Again, everything on a beautiful table must be consistent in quality. The same degree of fineness or style or type should run like a melody through each piece. A table setting must be as harmonious, whether formal or informal, as a good room scheme. The color of the linen and the color, design, and shape of the china and glassware should be carefully correlated.

Example 1: Informal table setting in an eighteenth-century dining room

Use a fruit-and-floral Spode plate with a footed tumbler in pressed glass on a yellow linen place mat. The mat matches the color of the fruit in the plate. Have a Spode bowl filled with fruit, which repeats the colors of the floral-and-fruit motif of the plate, as a centerpiece.

Example 2: Formal table setting in an eighteenth-century dining room

Use a Wedgwood plate with an embossed grape border and a tall goblet with Waterford cuttings on a lime-green damask cloth. The centerpiece is a Wedgwood compote flanked by four Wedgwood candlesticks with dark green candles. The compote is filled with white roses with dark green leaves.

Example 3: Informal table setting in an Early American dining room

Have a plate in blue willow pattern and a white milk-glass tumbler and butter plate on a red-and-white old-fashioned checkerboard tablecloth. The centerpiece is a milk-glass bowl filled with red apples.

Example 4: Formal table setting in an Early American dining room

Use a plate with Chinese scenic pattern in rose color with a fluted edge and a medium-stemmed goblet with a thumb-print pattern around the base of the bowl. The place mat is hydrangea-blue linen. The centerpiece is an earthenware soup tureen in the scenic pattern, filled with forget-me-nots and sweetheart roses which pick up the colors of the setting.

Example 5: Informal table setting for a Modern dining room

Have a square chartreuse plate on a dark green homespun mat. Have a napkin of chartreuse homespun. The glass is a heavy tumbler with a crystal sham bottom in a streamlined design. For a centerpiece, use a pair of Modern peasant figurines in chartreuse and dark green with cherry-red accents.

(*Courtesy of R H Macy and Co*)

Informality is the keynote of today's hospitality.

(*Courtesy of Josiah Wedgwood and Co., Inc.*)

Example 6: Formal table setting for a Modern dining room

Use a fine white plate, square in shape with no rim and no decoration. Have a raspberry linen cloth bound in white with matching napkins. Use a flared, cone-shaped plain goblet with a medium stem. The centerpiece is of rubrum lilies with shiny dark green leaves in an oval crystal bowl, flanked by a pair of simple glass compotes filled with pink and white mints.

No part of decoration offers more creative scope to the homemaker than composing a table setting. Like the scheme of a room, it reflects the personality of the hostess. That is why there is such keen enthusiasm for table-setting contests in garden clubs. A lovely table is always a challenge; it mirrors the imagination and originality of its creator and represents the epitome of grace in entertaining. Around the table, as around the hearth, the geniality of family life and the warmth of friendship gather. After all, the best measure of good taste in any home is the quality of its hospitality.

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